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ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО В. Н. УВАЧАН

## The Peoples of the North and Their Road to Socialism

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## FOREWORD

No Helicon in that mountain region,  
No bay-tree on the drifting flocs.  
The Chukchi have no Anacreon,  
To the Ziryans no Tyutchev goes.

These verses were written by A. A. Fet, a prominent Russian poet, on a book of poetry by F. I. Tyutchev, his contemporary of equal renown.

They represent an artist's interpretation of the view once widely circulated that the Chukchi, Ziryans and Komi,—the inhabitants of *syrts*—the vast steppelands of Central Asia,—and countless tribes and peoples had no history nor culture of their own, and were inferior or primitive races. This concept, typical of the ideology held by the exploiter classes, was also dominant in the science of history. From the peaks of European culture (actually, from racist and chauvinistic positions), bourgeois historians and ethnographers treated with contempt the history of many peoples in the colonial and dependent countries, including the history of the peoples of Siberia and the Far East.

Naturally, there were many views to the contrary expressed by those who sincerely and deeply believed in the unity of mankind, who regarded with sympathy and respect all representatives of the great family of peoples, irrespective of race. One such voice during the cruel era of the feudal state of Russian landlords, belonged to Alexander Radishchev, an outstanding Russian revolutionary and democrat of the 18th century.

Radishchev, "the foe of slavery and the friend of liberty", was exiled to Siberia and there came to know the indig-



enous population and their unfamiliar and strange languages. There he wrote his remarkable book, one of the first essays on the history of that distant land. It was a story not of conquest but of the "acquisition" of Siberia by the Russian people for the Russian state. It was the first book dedicated not to the tsar's servitors or the tsars themselves, but to the great feat and the wonderful achievements of the people. It gives a concise but clear and impressive picture of historical events in the remote past, from the Stone, the Bronze, and the Iron Ages to the Mongols of Genghis Khan.

The book marked the beginning of an unabating struggle between the two camps—democratic and reactionary,—between two trends—humanistic and chauvinistic. Since we have started with poetry, it is appropriate to continue with a stanza by Alexander Pushkin, the greatest of all Russian poets. This stanza is engraved on his statue in Moscow;  
*Rumour of me shall then my whole vast country fill,  
 In every tongue she owns my name she'll speak.  
 Proud Slav's posterity, Finn, and—unlettered still—  
 The Tungus, and the steppe-loving Kalmyk.*<sup>1</sup>

This was the great poet's last will addressed to posterity; it expresses his great humaneness and firm belief in the great future in store for his country and in Man's lofty mission on Earth.

Fet and Pushkin... two stanzas, each expressing a whole line of thought... two diametrically opposite concepts of human history. It was not by chance that in his *Monument* Pushkin referred to the "unlettered still—the Tungus".

Pushkin was deeply interested in the future of his country and its numerous peoples. Many a time Pushkin, the historian, turned his eyes to the Russian North while absorbed in historical research on the life and aspirations of the people. He, for instance, was fascinated by the impressive work of Academician Stepan Krasheninnikov, the son of a soldier, dedicated to Kamchatka and its inhabitants—Chukchi, Koryaks and Kamchadal-Itelmens. Krasheninnikov's work is replete with respect and sympathy for these tribes, their mythology—affirmative and poetic as Homer's *Iliad*

<sup>1</sup> A. Pushkin, *Selected Works* in two volumes, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 61.

and *Odyssey*,—for their naive beliefs, their peculiar culture and the stubborn struggle they waged against the severe and hostile nature.

Soviet historical science, above all archeology, had the distinction of discovering the deep historical roots and sources of the original and eloquent cultures of the northern tribes, without a knowledge of which the history of mankind's culture would be incomplete and, consequently, distorted.

In 1871 a collection of sculptures carved with a silicon chisel by a primitive artist from the tusks of a mammoth was discovered in Irkutsk next to the remains of a skeleton of a prehistoric horse and rhinoceros.

Later, rock drawings by neolithic hunters of elks and Siberian stags, were found on the Angara and the Lena.

Quite recently, geologists discovered rock drawings of remarkable ethnographic accuracy and vivacity on the deserted banks of the Pegtymel river in the tundra. They depict hunters on boats chasing northern deer crossing rivers, men armed with harpoons, mythological women, and spotted mushrooms from fantastic shaman legends and visions.

Bards of the nomadic tribes in the taiga and the tundra were composing songs and legends and primitive artists created realistic works five and even twenty thousand years ago in the remote parts of Siberia. Was it not they, the unknown generations of artists from the tundra, the taiga and the vast steppelands of Siberia, who prepared the way for northern Anacreons and Homers? Their colourful and epic creations are marvelled the world over.

Tungus tribes with their distinctive culture have always been prominent among the peoples of the North. The Tungus, who are now known as Evenks and Evens, inhabit the vast plains of North Asia; they have long and justly attracted the attention of historians, archeologists, anthropologists, linguists and ethnographers.

The Tungus are one of the most ancient peoples of the Asian continent; this fact finds proof in archeological monuments. Ancient burial sites on the banks of the Angara, the Lena and the Shilka contain national garments, which amaze ethnographers for their unique cut and ornamentation. Among them are sparkling mother-of-pearl beads and discs from nephrite decorating Tungus coats which were far more

elegant than the baggy, double-layer fur clothes of arctic tribes; the heavy greatcoats of the Mongols and Turks; and the *kukhlyankas* of Samoyeds.

These clothes were made by the Tungus thousands of years ago in the Stone Age; they were most fit for the mobile life of the Siberian taiga and tundra, for the life of a people occupied with fishing, hunting, trapping and reindeer breeding. They devised smokers to combat the ferocious mosquitoes and blood-sucking insects; they constructed the portable conic tents of birch bark or shammy; they made the first boat of birch bark to ride the swift mountain rivers and rapids; they invented many other things without which life in the taiga would have been impossible and without which the taiga itself would have remained uninhabitable for many thousands of years.

Soon an important event transpired in their life. They succeeded in domesticating the timid reindeer. That happened when the hunters, fishermen and plant-collectors passed from primitive acquisition to a productive economy. The domesticated reindeer gave wings to the Tungus people and made them full masters of the vast taiga, from the Arctic Ocean to Lake Baikal and the steppes of Mongolia.

In these remote times, the Tungus tribes contributed to the political history not only of Asia, but also of Europe. Tungusic was the language of the people who founded more than a thousand years ago Bokhai and Tsin, two powerful states renowned for their economic, political and cultural achievements. Much earlier, the hordes of Attila, the Scourge of God, besieged Rome. The burials of Huns contain paleosiberian skulls which resemble those of Evenks, who today live in the vicinity of Lake Baikal, and who, so it was asserted, had no history of their own.

The Tungus tribes and peoples have traversed a long and difficult path. The time came when they were drawn into the orbit of the multinational Russian state. It was a turning-point in their history because, in spite of tsarist oppression, they were affected by many progressive changes during their intercourse with the Russian people and the advanced Russian culture.

But those changes wrought upon the life of the successors of the ancient taiga culture, the eternal nomads doomed by

tsarism to extinction, are incomparable with the changes that occurred after the Great October Revolution, which opened before them unprecedented prospects for economic, political and cultural development. The whole world realised that Pushkin was right in predicting the time when his name would be pronounced not only by the proud grandchildren of Slavs, but also by the "unlettered still—the Tungus".

We are witnessing the fulfilment of Pushkin's prophecy: wonderful flowers of original national literature and poetry are blossoming in the Arctic. Tyutchev, too, is well-known to the Ziryans and Chukchi. Pushkin's poems have been translated into their languages. They now have their own poets and scholars who take the historical destinies of the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union as close to heart as those of their own.

One of those scholars is Vasily Uvachan, the author of this book, a prominent public figure and a builder of the new, socialist society. In order to clarify the significance of this book, a few words must be said about the author and his life. Though the book is not an autobiography, there are many autobiographic elements in it, for the story concerns his own and kindred peoples. The author narrates their history as the story of his own life. He is not an outsider, or a mere eyewitness, but an active personage in the events.

Vasily Uvachan is the son of his people, a contemporary of the October Revolution. He was born in 1917 into the family of a poor hunter, Nikolai Uvachan, in the remote village of Kresti, Katanga district. Had he been born earlier, Vasily Uvachan would have spent his entire life in the taiga chasing deer. But 1917 opened before him a broad avenue leading to a new and wonderful life.

In 1934 Vasily Uvachan became leader of the Young Pioneers in Katanga district. In 1935 the talented Evenk boy was sent to Leningrad to study in a special secondary school under the Institute of the Peoples of the North—the remarkable training centre which prepared many national specialists and builders of socialism. Then Uvachan joined a planning institute, and in 1940 was sent to the Higher Party School under the CC CPSU. But both in Leningrad and Moscow he could not resist the call of the native taiga. He became a lecturer for the Krasnoyarsk Territorial Committee



of the CPSU and later he was elected secretary for propaganda of the Evenk Area Party Committee.

A few years later, after a short course of studies he was elected first secretary of the Evenk Area Committee of the CPSU; next came the Academy of Social Sciences under the CC CPSU, a candidate's degree, and lecturing in the Novosibirsk Party School and the Siberian Technological Institute in Krasnoyarsk. This son of an illiterate Evenk hunter became a college instructor! Those who regarded the Tungus as an inferior people, doomed to perpetual backwardness, would have never believed it.

In 1961 Uvachan was one of the first Evenks to become a candidate of historical sciences and an assistant professor; he was once again elected first secretary of the Evenk Area Committee of the CPSU. In 1950, 1962, 1966 and 1970 he was deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; moreover, he was a delegate to the Party's 22nd, 23rd and 24th congresses. The Party's 23rd and 24th Congresses elected him to the Central Auditing Committee of the CPSU. He combines state and Party work with scientific and public activities. Uvachan is a member of the USSR Academy of Science's committee on problems of national relations and a member of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

In May 1970, Uvachan made another great stride forward: he was the first representative of the peoples of the North to win a doctor's degree. Such is the dynamic life of the author of this book. His life is a brilliant illustration of this book and of the road to socialism taken by the formerly oppressed peoples who were offered a new life by Lenin's nationalities policy.

At the 24th Congress of the CPSU Leonid Brezhnev said: "One of the greatest achievements of socialism is the practical implementation by the Party of the *Leninist national policy*, a policy promoting equality and friendship among peoples...."

"The Party shall continue to strengthen the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, consistently pursuing the Leninist line of promoting the florescence of the socialist nations and securing their gradual drawing together."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CC CPSU to the 24th Congress of the CPSU*, pp. 89-90.

The implementation of Lenin's nationalities policy is a remarkable accomplishment by the Communist Party ensuring the elimination of actual economic and cultural inequality and allowing nations to by-pass capitalism on the way to socialism.

This book is devoted not only to Evenks-Tungus, the author's kinsmen, but also to many other peoples inhabiting the vast expanses of North Asia—the Yenisei North. These lands are inhabited by Evenks (Tungus), Nentsi (Samoyeds), Entsi (Yenisei Samoyeds), Dolgans of the Turkic language family, Nganasans (Tavgi and Tavgi Samoyeds), Selkups (Ostyak-Samoyeds), Kets (Yenisei Ostyaks) and Yakut-Sakhas.

V. N. Uvachan devoted many years of his life to the history of the peoples of the North. His book is a worthy contribution.

Academician A. P. OKLADNIKOV

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Early in the morning of June 30, 1908, a gigantic fiery ball swept over Central Siberia and crashed somewhere between the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, the very heart where the Tungus roamed. The meteor, which came to be known as the Tungus Wonder, blazed a trail of fallen trees through the taiga.

The unique phenomenon made a deep impression on the Tungus. Tribal chiefs and shamans (medicine men) took advantage of the event to fortify the belief of ignorant and illiterate people in supernatural forces, to strengthen their religious fanaticism and, consequently, to intensify the exploitation of the toiling masses.

In 1917, the Great October Revolution carried out by the Russian proletariat swept as a cleansing storm over the length and breadth of the Russian empire. The salvoes of the *Aurora* announced the birth of the world's first socialist state of workers and peasants, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian revolution ushered in a new historic era—the era of the downfall of capitalism and the consolidation of communism.

While the revolutionary soldiers and sailors were still storming the Winter Palace—the last stronghold of the bourgeois Provisional Government,—Lenin, the leader of the revolution, declared at the extraordinary session of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies:

"Comrades, the workers' and peasants' revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has been accomplished....

"From now on a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism."<sup>1</sup>

The cleansing storm of the October Revolution swept away the bourgeois-landlord system and destroyed the regime of coercion and oppression. The happiness and freedom of all peoples of the vast Russian state were born on the banks of the Neva.

The significance of the Great October Revolution overrides that of any other event in the history of the peoples of Russia. The socialist revolution opened the road to rapid social progress, a road leading from poverty and ignorance, from political inequality and economic backwardness, from ruthless social and national oppression to the free and happy life of the builders of a communist society.

Lenin's immortal ideas illumined the historic road to socialism for the peoples of the North. It is not for nothing that the Evenk legends say that in only one *argish* (*march*) the Evenks crossed the stretches separating the tribal system from socialism. Though the *argish* was long and difficult, it took the Evenks only a few decades to complete.

The radical social, economic and cultural transformation of life of the peoples of the North was an element of the general task of building socialism in the USSR and of the Leninist nationalities policy. The triumph of socialism among the peoples of the North is the triumph of Lenin's ideas and of the Communist Party's theory and practice.

In the report on the 50th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, Leonid Brezhnev said: "To fathom the depth of the changes brought about by socialism would require the painstaking work of a scientist and the inspired song of a poet."<sup>2</sup>

The Communist Party took into strict account the situation in the national districts and the level of their social, economic and cultural development so as to ensure a pain-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, p. 30.



less passage to socialism for the peoples with precapitalist relations. This book analyses the concrete and specific measures with the help of which the peoples of the North were mobilised for the construction of socialism.

Lenin's works provide the basic theoretical and methodological principles for studying the history of Soviet society in general, and of the peoples of the North, in particular. These works laid the foundation upon which the Communist Party and the Soviet state have worked out concrete measures in regard to the future of the peoples of the North. Lenin's principles are incorporated in Party documents.

The historiography of the peoples of the Yenisei North is vast, it encompasses various aspects of social and economic life; quite a few works have been specifically dedicated to this historiography<sup>1</sup>. The author has made wide use of the Soviet and pre-revolutionary historiography of the peoples of the North, as well as of archival documents.

The author has endeavoured to incorporate as much as possible of Lenin's ideological legacy and, through it, to reconstruct the history of the peoples of the Yenisei North during the years of Soviet power, and elucidate the implementation of Lenin's immortal ideas in the Soviet North.

The book is based on documentary materials of the CC CPSU, the Soviet Government, and local Party and Soviet organisations, as well as in central and local archives. The most valuable documents are to be found in the Central Party Archive of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (CPAIML) under the CC CPSU. The fund of V. I. Lenin and the archives of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR contain Lenin's documents determining the mode of developing the North and setting the Party's policy in regard to the northern nomadic peoples. The author succeeded in uncovering Lenin's documents pertaining to the problems of the North.

<sup>1</sup> V. N. Uvachan, *Yeniseiski Sever* (Yenisei North). Bibliography, Krasnoyarsk, 1959; *Sovietskaya Evenkia* (Soviet Evenkia), Bibliography, Krasnoyarsk, 1962; *Bibliography of Krasnoyarsk Territory (1924-60)*, Vol. 1, Krasnoyarsk, 1964.

Documents relating to political, economic and cultural life as well as to the development of the natural resources in the North can be found in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, supreme organs of state power and administration of the USSR (CSAOR).

The State Archive of Novosibirsk Region (SANR) contains documents of Siberian Soviet organs which reflect the creation of the statehood of the peoples of the North in the 1920-30s. The Party Archive of the Irkutsk Regional Committee of the CPSU (PAIRC) contains documents referring to the Taimyr and Evenk national areas. The author also made use of documents of the East-Siberian Territorial Executive Committee and the East-Siberian Committee for the North from the State Archives of Irkutsk Region (SAIR).

Since the formation of Krasnoyarsk Territory (December 1934) all the documents of Party organisations of the Yenisei North are concentrated in the Party Archive of the Krasnoyarsk Territorial Committee of the CPSU (PAKTC). The book contains documents from the State Archive of Krasnoyarsk Territory (SAKT), the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee, the Turukhansk Revolutionary Committee and the Territorial Executive Committee, and the Krasnoyarsk Committee for the North. Interesting documents relating to the initial period of Soviet power in Turukhansk territory can be found in the Yenisei State Archive (YSA).

Documents referring to the post-war period were taken from the state archives of Taimyr and Evenk areas (SATA and SAEA) and also from the Central Archive of the Norilsk Metallurgical Plant (CANMP).

References have the following meaning: fd.—fund; reg.—register; f.—file; l.—list.

Collections of documents and statistical data were also used.

Before the October Revolution, the Turukhansk territory was a forlorn land of white silence and great sorrow. It was called "the wretched Turukhansk" and "the prison without bars". This terrible past has gone forever. Socialism is blossoming, and now communism is taking root in the Yenisei North. In a letter to the Young Pioneers of Igarka, the great

Soviet writer Maxim Gorky justly pointed out that the radiance of human intelligence illumines the polar night.

Lenin recommended to link the past with the present and the future, to examine all phases of time in a direct and inseparable relationship. He insisted that a correct assessment of the past provides material lessons for successful progress towards the future.<sup>1</sup> This is precisely why the book begins with an examination of the pre-revolutionary position of the peoples of the North.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 445.

# I

## Chapter

# The North

## Under Russia

### 1. Nature, Population, Migration of Russians to Siberia.

The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, a regularity and consistency; so that at first we had a society without classes—the original patriarchal, primitive society....

V. I. Lenin

Tsarist Russia was a vast country inhabited by different nations, peoples, tribes and ethnic groups at different levels of social, economic and cultural development. On the eve of the revolution, the non-Russian population reached 65 million, of which approximately 30 million (Kirghiz, Yakuts, Buryats, Kalmyks, Komi and others) had not passed through the stage of capitalist development, and 6 million were enmeshed in semi-patriarchal or semi-feudal relations. The peoples of the Far North belonged to the latter group.<sup>1</sup>

The 1959 census placed them in a special category of the peoples of the North; their total population was 127,100. The 1970 census placed them in the category incorporating

<sup>1</sup> It is customary in Soviet historical and ethnographic literature to refer to them as small nations or ethnic groups. These comprise 26 nationalities inhabiting the vast expanses of the Far North, from the Kola Peninsula to Chukotka, Kamchatka, Sakhalin and the lower reaches of the Amur. The following is a list of these nationalities (the pre-revolutionary names are given in brackets): Saami (Lapps), Khanty (Ostyaks), Mansi (Voguls), Nentsi (Samoyeds), Entsi, Nganasans (Tavgi), Selkups (Ostyak-Samoyeds), Kets (Yeniseians), Evenks (Tungus), Evens (Lamuts), Dolgans, Nanais (Golds), Negidals, Ulchi, Udeghes, Oroches, Oroks, Nivkhi (Gilyaks), Chukchi, Koryaks, Itelmens, Yukagirs, Chuvans, Eskimos, Aleuts and Tofalars (Karagases).



the peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East with a combined population of 151,000.<sup>1</sup>

This work is devoted to the peoples of the Yenisei North—the vast territory which stretches from approximately the town of Yeniseisk in the south to the shores of the Arctic Ocean and its islands. The Yenisei North encompasses the basins of the Yenisei and its tributaries—the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, Angara, Kureika, Turukhan, Eloguya, Ketī—and also the basins of the Khatanga, Kheta, Pyasina, Taimyr and the Taz. The total area amounted to nearly 2 million square kilometres. Before the revolution, it was known as the Turukhansk territory; it was an administrative unit of Yeniseisk Gubernia with its centre in Krasnoyarsk.<sup>2</sup>

The indigenous population of the Yenisei North are the Evenks (Tungus), the Nentsi (Samoyeds), the Entsi (Yenisei Samoyeds), the Dolgans, the Nganasans (Tavgi), the Selkups (Ostyak-Samoyeds), the Kets (Yeniseians) and the Yakuts. They all belong to different ethnic and language families.

Soviet ethnography and history usually classify the peoples according to their linguistic affiliation. The peoples of the North belong to the Finno-Ugric, Samoyedic, Tungusic-Manchu, Paleo-Asiatic and Siberian-Turkic language families.

Thus, the Evenks belong to the Tungus-Manchu group; the Nentsi, Entsi, Selkups and Nganasans—to the Samoyedic group; the Kets—to the Paleo-Asiatic group; and the Yakuts and Dolgans—to the Siberian-Turkic group.

Common for all the peoples of the North before the revolution was their extreme political, economic and cultural backwardness—a direct result of the colonial policy pursued by tsarism and the bourgeoisie.

Natural and climatic conditions in the Yenisei North are exceptionally severe, requiring great efforts on the part of man to procure the means of sustenance.

<sup>1</sup> *Itogi Vsesoyuznoi perepisi naseleniya 1959 goda. SSSR.* (Returns of the All-Union Census of 1959. USSR), Summary volume, Moscow, 1962, p. 186; *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1970 godu* (The USSR in Figures, 1970), Moscow, 1971, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> The terms "Turukhansk territory", "the Turukhansk North", the "Yenisei North", and the "Krasnoyarsk North" are identical in meaning.

The territory is divided into two zones—the tundra (arctic tundra and tundra proper) and the taiga (forest-tundra and taiga proper).

The climate in the tundra is severe; the summers are short, cold and with few sunny days; strong winds are frequent, the blizzards in winter last for many days at a stretch. The flora and fauna are poor (moss, lichen and shrub; reindeer, hare, fox, polar fox, geese and duck), but the rivers abound in sturgeon, sterlet, white salmon, whitefish, and others.

The fauna and flora in the taiga are richer than in the tundra. The game (reindeer, bear, elk, fox, squirrel, sable, otter, polar fox) and fowl (wood-grouse, black-grouse, hazel-grouse, ducks, geese) are abundant. There are many edible mushrooms and berries; larch, silver fir, cedar, pine and birch trees grow in the forests. The Yenisei and other rivers, and also the lakes abound in salmon, lake whitefish, sturgeon, pike, perch and dace.

This abundance of fauna and flora is the principal means of sustenance for the peoples of the North. They provide essential means of production, food and household articles. The ungulates were the source for food, clothing and footwear; the furs were exchanged for imported goods; timber was used to build dwellings, boats and sledges and also various household articles.

The Yenisei North is exceptionally rich in coal, graphite, copper, nickel, Iceland spar, and iron ore. Before the revolution, these deposits were practically untapped.

The Far North had been a magnet attracting Russians for a long time.

The first trails to the North and the lands beyond the Urals were blazed by the courageous citizens of Novgorod back in the 11th century. As Karl Marx said, the people of Novgorod "forced their way to Siberia through the thick of forests; they partially civilised and converted to Christianity the boundless territory between Lake Ladoga, the White Sea, Novaya Zemlya and Lake Onega."

The birth of the centralised Russian state with Moscow as its centre initiated the subsequent territorial expansion and growing influence on adjacent lands. It began to gather in many other peoples, turning into a multinational state.

Having acquired the Volga area, in the middle of the 16th century, the Russian state began to advance into Western Siberia. The first step was made by Yermak who undertook his famous campaign against Kuchum, the Khan of Siberia, routed his hordes and seized Isker, the capital of Siberia. As Karl Marx said, Yermak's campaign laid the foundation for Asiatic Russia.

Siberia was officially incorporated into Russia in 1581 under Tsar Ivan the Terrible. This act opened for the Russians the road to Eastern Siberia, primarily to the basin of the Yenisei river and its tributaries—the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and Podkamennaya Tunguska, the Angara—and also to the huge Taimyr Peninsula.

The roads on which the Russians advanced from Western to Eastern Siberia have been scrupulously studied by the prominent Soviet historian S. V. Bakhrushin. Summing up the results of his research, S. V. Bakhrushin concluded that the Russians penetrated into the Yenisei basin by the southern route via the Ket, and the northern route via the Mangazeya.<sup>1</sup>

Since the routes by which the Russians penetrated from the Yenisei further east to the Lena are less known, it seems justifiable to dwell in detail on the annexation of the huge territory between the Yenisei and the Lena by Russia. Though it leads us slightly away from the chronological order of this book, the digression is important for an understanding of subsequent events in the social, economic and historic evolution of the peoples of the Yenisei North.

Mangazeya, founded in 1601 on the Taz river, became the advance post for the Russian thrust further east. In 1609 Russian pioneers founded the Turukhan winter settlement. "This route," S. V. Bakhrushin wrote, "later became the principal way by which the Russians reached the Yenisei back in the 16th century."<sup>2</sup>

The first information concerning the Yenisei may be dated back to the eighties or the nineties of the 16th century.

<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *Ocherki po kolonizatsii Sibiri v XVI i XVII vv.* (Essays on the Colonisation of Siberia in the 16th and 17th Centuries), USSR Academy of Sciences, Vol. 3, Part 1, Moscow, 1955, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 115; also, M. I. Belov, *Mangazeya*, Leningrad, 1969.

In the beginning of the 17th century Mangazeya was already a substantial trading post and fort. It was surrounded by a wall of logs with five towers. The population consisted of nearly a thousand permanent and the same number of temporary inhabitants. The turnover in trade amounted to 100,000 rubles. Mangazeya stood on the land of the Nentsi and Entsi.

In the beginning of the 17th century Russian pioneers began to advance from the Taz towards the Yenisei, penetrating into the lower reaches of the river towards the Gulf of Yenisei, and then, up its right tributaries, towards the Pyasina, Khatanga, Angara and Lena.

In 1607 a Cossack from the Tobol North, Mikhail Kamishlov, became the first Russian who travelled along the route from the Ob to the Yenisei in a boat. Soon he was followed by other pioneers.

In 1610 Kondrati Kurochkin from the Dvina went down the Yenisei in *kochas* (sailing boats), reached its mouth, sailed in to the sea and in five weeks' time arrived at the Pyasina; next he turned west towards the Ob inlet and discovered that the Yenisei flowed into one of the bays of the Arctic Ocean and that there was a sea route to the Yenisei's mouth allowing the passage of sizeable craft.

From the Pyasina the pioneers dragged through the taiga their boats to the Khatanga.

Thus they opened the lands between the Yenisei and the Khatanga inhabited by the Samoyeds, Tavgi, Dolgans and partly by Tungus and Yakuts. Dudinka, which was founded in 1610 by K. Kurochkin, became the stronghold for the development of the vast territory.

Accordingly we can set 1610 as the date when the Russians began to settle in the Yenisei basin and the peoples of the Yenisei North were annexed to the Russian state.

The basin of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska was also opened in the first decade of the 17th century. The Russians penetrated into Tungusia and discovered the road to the Lena.

In the beginning of the 17th century, the Cossack Mikhail Stadukhin sailed upstream, reached the middle course of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, and from there with the help of Tungus proceeded on reindeer to the upper reaches of the Vilyui, continued downstream by boat and reached the Lena. In the



1640s Mikhail Stadukhin reached the Lena's mouth in *kochas* and, following the coastline, arrived at the Kolyma.

In 1620-22 Penda with a band of Cossacks moved by boat up the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, reached the river source, portaged the boats from the Chechui to the Lena, and moved downstream to the point where P. Beketov was to found the town of Yakutsk in 1632. It was an outstanding event. From there, Penda returned to the upper reaches of the Lena (where Verkholensk now stands), crossed the Buryat steppes to the Angara, went downstream until he reached the Yenisei and then proceeded to Turukhansk. On the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, Penda founded small settlements which served the Russians as outposts during colonisation of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska<sup>1</sup>.

In this way the vast territory between the Yenisei and the Tunguska inhabited by Tungus and Yakuts was colonised. In the first decade of the 17th century the Tungus people, inhabiting the Yenisei and the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, were incorporated by Russia. Tungus chiefs resolved of their own accord to pay *yasaks* (tribute) to the Russians. The historian I. Y. Fischer writes that the Tungus came to Turukhansk "from everywhere, from the lower and upper reaches of the Yenisei, Tunguska, Podkamennaya Tunguska and other rivers and rivulets which fall into the great Yenisei. Some came in sable greatcoats; the skis of others were padded with sable"<sup>2</sup>.

The springboard for the colonisation of this region was Turukhansk, which was founded in 1609.

The third road by which the Russians penetrated to the Lena was through Yeniseisk, by way of which they reached the riverhead and Lake Baikal.

The land between the Angara and the Lena, inhabited by Tungus and Buryats, was colonised. Yeniseisk was founded in 1619. In the 17th through the 19th centuries it was

<sup>1</sup> A. P. Okladnikov, "Penda—zabitii Russkii zemleprokhodets XVII Veka" ("Penda, the Forgotten Russian Pioneer of the 17th Century"), *Letopis Severa*, (Annals of the North), Moscow, 1949, Vol. 1, pp. 94-102.

<sup>2</sup> I. Y. Fischer, *Sibirskaya istoria s samogo otkritiya Sibiri do zavoyevaniya sei zemli Rossiiskim oruzhiyem*, (History of Siberia from Its Discovery to Its Conquest by Russian Arms), St. Petersburg, 1774, p. 279.

an important economic and cultural centre in Siberia and the Yenisei North.

S. V. Bakhrushin was absolutely correct when he wrote that "in the decade from 1630 to 1641 the routes from the Yenisei to the Lena were fully explored"<sup>4</sup>.

In a very short time, Russian pioneers succeeded in exploring the northern coastline and the vast territories between the Yenisei and the Khatanga, the Yenisei and the Tunguska, the Angara and the Lena; they reached the Lena and the Amur, opening the road for penetration into the Far East. These vast territories were politically annexed by Russia.

In 1639 the Russian pioneer I. Y. Moskvitin became the first European to reach the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk—"the Lama as the Tungus call it", he reported. "This was the first Russian expedition to reach the shores of the Pacific Ocean. It marked the completion of the movement of Russians over the 'rock' (the Urals) started in the 1680s by Yermak. During those 60 years, the Russian people crossed a vast territory stretching for more than 6,000 kilometres"<sup>2</sup>.

The Russian people took a secure foothold on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. In this connection Lenin wrote: "Geographically, economically and historically, Russia belongs not only to Europe, but also to Asia"<sup>3</sup>.

The development of the huge territories in North Siberia was an outstanding feat of the Russian people. Most of the credit should go to the craftsmen and peasants who fled from serfdom and sought a free life in Siberia. Gorky wrote that the Russian people "unaided by the state, seized and added to Moscow the expanses of Siberia with the hands of Yermak and the freebooters who fled from the boyars....

"The Russian people personified by Dezhnev, Krasninnikov, Khabarov and other pioneers discovered new lands and straits—all at their own risk and expense....

<sup>4</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> N. N. Stepanov, "Pervaya russkaya ekspeditsiya na Okhotskom poberezhye v XVII veke" (The First Russian Expedition to the Coast of the Sea of Okhotsk in the 17th Century), *Izvestiya Usesoyuznogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva*, 1958, Vol. 90, p. 451.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 251.

"This people has accomplished much, it has a great history."<sup>1</sup>

The annexation of the Yenisei North by the Russian state was objectively of great progressive significance for the native peoples. They won security and reliable protection from foreign invasions. Russian toilers, primarily the peasants, acquainted them with higher forms of economy and culture. New vistas for the further economic and cultural development were opened to the peoples of the North.

Alexander Herzen wrote: "The Russians crossed oceans of ice and snow at their own risk; where the tired groups of people settled down—in the frozen steppes and forlorn places—life began to simmer, the fields blossomed and herds of cattle grazed on meadows; and that could be seen from Perm to the Pacific Ocean"<sup>2</sup>.

The annexation of the Yenisei North by Russia reinvigorated the vast territory and drew the native population into the orbit of the historical advancement of the Russian people. Previously, the peoples of the North had remained at an early stage of social and economic development. True, they had developed a distinctive arctic culture: they had invented dozens of trapping and fishing implements, they were ably breeding reindeer, they knew how to make clothes, dwellings and household articles suitable for the severe climatic conditions and nomadic way of life, but their production and material culture was primitive and squalid. As Frederick Engels said, they lived in "the period in which the appropriation of natural products, ready for use, predominated"<sup>3</sup>. The bow and arrow and stone implements were dominant even in the beginning of the 17th century.

The firearms which they got from the Russians stimulated hunting and, of course, improved to a certain extent the material welfare of the indigenous population. The loan-words prove beyond doubt that the firearms came from the Russians. The Russian equivalents for gunpowder, piston,

<sup>1</sup> A. M. Gorky, *Istoriya russkoi literatury* (The History of Russian Literature), Moscow, 1939, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> A. I. Herzen, *Complete Works and Correspondence*, Petrograd, 1919. Vol. 9, p. 458 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 209.

capsule, rifle and Berdan rifle were incorporated in the vocabularies of Tungus, Samoyeds, Dolgans, Kets and other peoples. True, the Tungus, Dolgans and Nganasans had different names for fowling-pieces.

The higher form of economy of the Russians influenced the local population and it adopted the Russian way of life and work, this influence being particularly strong in agriculture.

Horse-breeding was probably already known to the Tungus who lived east of Lake Baikal for they have their own word for the horse—*murin*.<sup>1</sup> The Tungus reindeer-breeders called them "*murchen*" (horsekeepers). The horse and the reindeer were used only for saddle-riding. It was the Russians who taught them to harness the reindeer. The words meaning "shaft-bow", "collar", "shaft", etc., were adopted from the Russian.

Before annexation, the peoples of the Yenisei North had practically no permanent settlements. The Russians built hundreds of settlements. At the beginning of the 20th century there were 133 major inhabited localities, including Yeniseisk, Vorogovo, Verkhne-Imbatskoye, Podkamennaya Tunguska, Turukhansk, Dudinka, Khatanga, Yerbogachen and Preobrazhenka.

Influenced by the Russians and as a result of intermarriage, some groups of northern people began to settle down at the end of the 19th century; they built Russian-type log huts. The Tungus in the upper reaches of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska (the present Khatanga district, Irkutsk Region) settled down before the October Revolution. Their settlements numbered 10 to 15 households. The fact that these settlements belonged to the Tungus is evidenced by their names. Many Selkup and Ket families on the Yenisei also settled down and lived side by side with the Russians.

Many household articles were adopted from the Russians (the local equivalents for table, chair, bed, plate, fork and other items are loan-words from the Russian).

The peoples of the North made their clothes from the skin of reindeer, elk, bear, fur-bearing animals, and also

<sup>1</sup> The word *murin* is of Buryat-Mongolian origin. In Buryat it sounds "*morin*", and in Mongolian—"mori".



from the skin of fish. From the Russians, they adopted cloth shirts and pants, felt boots and leather footwear. They began to eat bread and other products made from flour, sugar, butter, sweets, and to drink tea. Earlier, they had consumed nothing but meat, fats, fish and, in small amounts, vegetables.

The names of many of the foods (sugar, butter, sweets) were borrowed from the Russian.

Thus, the Russians made a considerable impact on all aspects of life in the North.

In turn, the peoples of the North influenced the Russian settlers. The Russians adopted from them many trapping and fishing implements, warm clothes suitable for the severe climatic conditions, means of transport (reindeer, dogs), foods and ways of cooking them. Consequently, even long ago and in spite of tsarism and its colonial policy, ordinary Russians and the indigenous population worked side by side, exchanged implements and know-how, developed the northern territories and its productive forces. These contacts were useful and important, they prepared the foundation for the future friendship of the peoples of the North with the Russians and the other peoples of Russia. The annexation of the peoples of the North by Russia in the beginning of the 17th century was a turning-point in their history.

## 2. The Economic System of the Peoples of the North

Patriarchal forms of economic and social relations existed in the North until the Great October Revolution. The main sources of sustenance were hunting, trapping, fishing and reindeer-breeding. A natural economy was predominant.

A typical feature of this economy in the North was that each family was simultaneously occupied in hunting, fishing and reindeer-breeding. Frederick Engels brilliantly interpreted this phenomenon: "Exclusively hunting peoples, such as figure in books, that is, peoples subsisting *solely* by hunt-

ing, have never existed, for the fruits of the chase are much too precarious to make that possible."<sup>1</sup>

The complex character of the natural economy was due to several social and economic factors: the low technical level of the implements of production, poor development of the social division of labour and exchange, the variety of natural resources, and the seasonal character of hunting and fishing. Not a single occupation could independently provide for the material requirements of the population; they were all interconnected and mutually complementary. Each family was usually engaged in several occupations, one of which was pivotal.

Reindeer-breeding was the chief occupation of the Samoyeds, Ents, Dolgans, Taygi and Essei Yakuts who lived in the tundra and occasionally, in the forest-tundra regions. They also hunted fur-bearing animals and fowl and fished in the rivers and lakes.

Hunting was the main occupation of Tungus, Yeniseians and Ostyak-Samoyeds who inhabited the forest zone. Reindeer-breeding and fishing were subsidiary. Such a complex of economic activities was mostly characteristic of the forest-tundra and taiga areas.

Fishing became the main occupation of nomads who, deprived of reindeer, were compelled to settle down near the lakes and rivers.

Hunting and fishing implements, though varied and original, were primitive and ineffective. Fur animals and ungulates were shot mostly with fowling-pieces supplied by the Russians, but bows and arrows, spears, and traps were also employed.

Fishing was carried over by different methods, depending on the time of the year, the nature of the fishing-grounds and the type of fish. The main implements were nets, sweep-nets, traps and hooks. Some peoples, e.g. Tungus, used the harpoon, particularly during dark nights in the autumn. The boats for fishing were made of bark or plank, some were hewed out of tree trunks.

Reindeer-breeding was an important means of sustenance,

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 205.

providing some groups with all their needs—food, dwellings, clothing and footwear. Flesh and marrow were used for food, the hides for clothing, footwear and tents, the antlers and hides were used to make various hunting and fishing gear, the tendons served as thread. Besides, the reindeer was the most reliable means of transport in the tundra and the taiga. It could be ridden either in the saddle or in harness. The natives invented the saddle, sledge and harness suitable for the prevailing climate. Hunting—which required constant movement—also depended on reindeer-breeding.

Technically, however, reindeer-breeding was at a very low level, in spite of the fact that the natives knew the habits of the animals and had acquired great experience in breeding them. There was, of course, no veterinary or zootechnical aid. Animals perished in great numbers from diseases, during calving and from starvation, particularly when the ground was covered with ice crust. Ignorant and poverty-stricken, the natives had no ability or resources to protect the animals from natural calamities.

Dogs played an important part in the household. They helped to hunt, protected the master from the bear, the wolf and other beasts of prey, and pulled the sledge or the boat loaded with hunting gear, firewood or water. Each hunter kept several dogs, some for trapping, some for hunting, and others for fowling.

Under the influence of Russian peasants, some northern peoples (the Katanga and Angara Tungus, the Yenisei Ostyak-Samoyeds) began to cultivate crops and raise stock. They adopted fully the Russian methods of crop cultivation and livestock-breeding.

The way of life of the northern peoples was conditioned by their economic activities. Reindeer-breeding and hunting require constant movement in search of pasture and hunting-grounds, so most of the population led a nomadic way of life. They lived in conic tents—*chooms*—made of hide in winter or bark in summer and propped by poles. The *choom* is very convenient for nomadism because it is easy to pitch and light to move from place to place. Inside, a fireplace provides light and heat, but in winter it is warm only as long as the fire is kept going.

A few families—only those who had lost their reindeer—settled near Russian habitations before the revolution. They lived in dugouts or, sometimes, in Russian-type log huts.

Domestic crafts (processing of game, fish, reindeer, manufacture of hunting and fishing gear as well as means of transportation and household articles) were quite widespread. But these crafts were primitive, and all work was done by hand. The time-honoured division of labour persisted—men made implements, while women dressed hides and made clothes and household items.

Lenin pointed out that “domestic industries are a necessary adjunct of natural economy, remnants of which are nearly always retained where there is a small peasantry”.<sup>1</sup>

This material culture was exceptionally suitable for the rigorous conditions in the taiga and the tundra. Though primitive, the implements and household articles were original and served their purpose. They embodied the experience and ingenuity of the artisan who did his best to assist the people in procuring the means of sustenance.

In spite of genuine heroism displayed in the struggle against the severe arctic conditions, the ordinary people failed to achieve even minimally satisfactory material and cultural standards. In winter, they worked in the cold and braved blizzards, in summer they worked under rain. Regardless of the season they worked in the open air under the most difficult conditions. The *chooms* were cold and damp, full of smoke and virtually devoid of light. The elements always threatened the people; bad weather drastically reduced the catch and bag; the absence of game or fish or the loss of reindeer was a real disaster. The inhabitants of the northern latitudes eked out a miserable existence because of the lack of efficient implements. Lenin wrote: “Primitive man was absolutely crushed by the burden of existence, by the difficulties of the struggle against Nature.”<sup>2</sup>

The aborigines consumed practically no carbohydrates (bread, cereals) or vitamins (vegetables, fruit, butter).

They simply appropriated animal and plant products. The industries facilitating this produce were of a primitive nature.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 111.



The classics of Marxism-Leninism regard such tribes as hunters, and their industries as an undeveloped stage of production. Karl Marx wrote: "Tribes living exclusively on hunting or fishing are beyond the boundary line from which real development begins."<sup>1</sup>

In literature, this type of production received the name of an "appropriating form of economy". Soon, however, being influenced by the higher forms of economy, the peoples of the North began to master "methods of increasing the productivity of nature through human activity".<sup>2</sup> This was of great and progressive significance for their history and social development.

The economic base of the territorially adjacent or village communities was the communal ownership of land (pasturelands, hunting and fishing grounds) and permanent or temporary forms of ownership of the implements of labour. This served as the basis for permanent or temporary joint labour production associations (grazing of reindeer, hunting, and fishing). This is explained by the poor development of the productive forces and man's helplessness before nature. Karl Marx pointed out that "this primitive type of cooperative or collective production was, of course, the result of the weakness of the individual, and not only the socialisation of the means of production".<sup>3</sup>

Each community occupied a definite territory for hunting, fishing and grazing, but this territory was never turned into private property, it was considered as the common property of the neighbouring communities.

The members of each community used the land in common, no one owned it in private.

The pre-revolutionary students of Siberia pointed out that the Tungus had communal ownership of land in the so-called clan districts: "Each clan has its own fishing and hunting grounds inherited from father by son, but the right of property is restricted to the actual use of these grounds."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow, 1970, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 19, S. 388.

<sup>4</sup> K. M. Richkov, "Yeniseiskiy Tungusi" (Yenisei Tungus), *Zemlevedeniye*, Books 3-4, Moscow, 1922, p. 144.

The old communal-clan utilisation of land was retained for some time after the inauguration of Soviet power in the North. The native there had his own rivulet for fishing and his own hunting grounds, which however belonged to the whole clan and not to him personally, but the borders were inviolable.

In its report for 1931-32, the Podkamennaya Tunguska Land-Management Expedition of the East Siberia Land Trust pointed out that "all Evenk hunting and fishing grounds are divided among various clans". All hunters, including those who had been orphans or adopted by the clan, have equal rights to these grounds.

Consequently, the forms and order of land tenure among the peoples of the North, particularly among the Tungus, were based on common law, i.e., in conformity with "clan areas". This historically evolved system was not officially written up in documents, but it nevertheless was strictly adhered to. One of the documents in the archives of the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee says that "the borders among the Tungus do exist. People seldom leave one clan for another".<sup>1</sup>

Our information about land tenure among the peoples of the North corroborates Karl Marx's conclusions about the forms of land tenure at the early stages of human society. In his work *The Pre-Capitalist Forms of Production*, Karl Marx wrote: "People naively regard the land as *public property*. . . . Every single person is only a link of the collective, a member of this collective—he is an owner, a proprietor". The nomadic shepherd tribes "regard land as their property, though they never legalise this property. Such property encompasses hunting grounds". In the case of the peoples of the North, these were hunting and fishing grounds and reindeer pastures. They defended them from incursions by other tribes and even other clans within their own tribe. Further on Karl Marx expresses the interesting idea that "actually, the community in nomadic shepherd tribes is always collected; it is the society of fellow-travellers. . . . Actually, it is the herd, and not the land that is *appropriated and reproduced*".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd, 27, reg. 11, f. 28, 1. 57.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*, Moskau, 1939, S. 390.

So on the eve of the October Revolution, the peoples of the North retained communal land ownership patterns.

The unequal terms of trade worsened the economic position of the local population. In the middle of the 19th century, for instance, merchants bought 16 kg of rye flour for only 37 kopecks, but sold it for 1.67 rubles to the local population or exchanged it for a pair of sable or a dozen squirrel pelts.

The merchants were real swindlers, they induced Tungus to drink and extended credits as a means of ensnarement. Whole generations could not repay the debts, they were inherited by sons and even grandsons.

As commodity-money relations developed, commercial capital began to penetrate into the North quite rapidly, particularly at the turn of the present century. Since the economy was backward and marked by an absence of a social division of labour, merchants and usurers virtually robbed the population. Karl Marx pointed out that merchant capital "develops that much more in a given country, the more the main body of production is limited to natural services, etc., that is, to use-values"<sup>1</sup>. He added: "So long as merchant capital promotes the exchange of products between undeveloped societies, commercial profit not only appears as outbargaining and cheating, but also largely originates from them."<sup>2</sup>

Actually, it was not commerce but real plunder and looting.

The exchange was absolutely unfair, the merchants gave vodka to the local hunters and once the latter were drunk, they were easily swindled. From such operations the merchants made profits of ranging from 50 to 300 per cent. Karl Marx pointed out that merchant capital "impoverishes the mode of production, paralyses the productive forces instead of developing them, and at the same time perpetuates the miserable conditions in which the social productivity of labour is not developed at the expense of labour itself, as in the capitalist mode of production"<sup>3</sup>.

This is precisely why production was so primitive right up to the turn of the 20th century. That, of course, perpetu-

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, p. 596.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 582.

ated extreme economic backwardness and stagnation in production and social relations. Merchant capital perpetuated a backward and isolated economy just as tsarism perpetuated patriarchal social relations.

Moreover, merchant capital corrupted the natives. The conduct of merchants was such that the natives neither respected nor trusted them.

Progressive people in Russia protested against the looting and humiliation of the population in the North. N. M. Yadrintsev, a prominent public figure in Siberia wrote: "It is wrong to represent this civilisation as a dragon which devours the native, it is unjust to give him over to the beasts of prey, to merchants and kulaks who instead of representing civilisation are actually its scum, its seamy side."<sup>1</sup> The tsarist government's attitude towards the natives was "shocking, callous and heartless".

N. G. Chernyshevsky, who was deported to Vilyui, wrote: "It is painful to look at these people. I know what poverty is, I know it very well. But the sight of these people cannot leave me indifferent: their distress stirs even my hardened soul. I stopped going to town only to escape the sight of these miserable people, I evade all forest paths where they roam."<sup>2</sup> The revolutionary democrat A.P. Shchapov, writing about the difficult life of natives, underlined that these "talented and courageous people are stagnating in ignorance, while we, instead of enlightening them, have ruined and spoiled and downtrodden them to ultimate extinction"<sup>3</sup>. While in exile in 1913-17, Y. M. Sverdlov, an outstanding leader in the Communist Party and the Soviet government, wrote his *Essays about the Turukhansk Territory* in which he said: "The people are procuring their livelihood by fishing and hunting. They need various implements and tackle... All that they can get only from merchants... so they have to buy on credit... The man who has entered into one or another form

<sup>1</sup> N. M. Yadrintsev, *Sibirskiye Inorodtsy, ikh byt i sovremennoye polozheniye* (Siberian Natives, Their Life and Present Position), St. Petersburg, 1891, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Chernyshevsky v Sibiri*, (Chernyshevsky in Siberia), Correspondence, Issue 1, St. Petersburg, 1913, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> A. P. Shchapov, *Works*, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1906, p. 366 (in Russian).



of credit relations usually cannot clear his debts. All his spoils go to 'his' merchant, but the debt remains. The merchant forces him to take things he does not need at all.... The merchant registers something in his books, but what exactly, nobody knows."<sup>1</sup>

In 1916, while in political exile in Yakutia, Y.M. Yaroslavsky, a prominent scientist and Party functionary, took part in an ethnographic expedition which explored the basins of the Lena and the Olekma. He also noted that tsarist officials and merchants were swindling and ruthlessly exploiting the local population.

Gradually, merchant capital destroyed the natural economy of the peoples of the North. But the disintegration of the natural economy and its transformation into a small-commodity economy was slow and exceedingly painful. By the beginning of the 20th century the economy in the Yenisei North was still patriarchal, the small-commodity production was at an incipient stage.

After 1861, when serfdom was abolished in Russia, capitalism began to spread horizontally, drawing into its orbit the outskirts of Russia, particularly Siberia and the Far North with their tremendous natural wealth and resources. In his book *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, Lenin explained the motives behind this process: "Things are going badly with 'us' because in the old places 'we' have already picked the people clean and now have to enter the field of industrial capital, which cannot enrich us as much as merchant capital. And so 'we' will go to the eastern and northern border regions of European Russia, where 'primitive accumulation', which yields a profit of hundreds per cent, is still possible, where the bourgeois differentiation of the peasantry is still far from complete."<sup>2</sup>

But since productive forces in the Far North were very poorly developed and because the patriarchal economy held sway, industrial capitalism failed to penetrate deeply, and, of course, exerted a secondary influence. Only merchant cap-

<sup>1</sup> Y. M. Sverdlov, *Collected Works* in three volumes, Moscow, 1957, Vol. 1, pp. 63-64 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 311.

ital made headway in the direction of "primitive accumulation" thereby ensuring fantastic profits. The knights of primitive accumulation forced their way to profits with iron and sword. Every ruble of profit was drenched in the misery and suffering of the toiling people.

The peoples of the North had no time to pass through the stage of industrial capitalism; the Great October Revolution saved them from it.

Of course, it would be wrong to deny that feudal and, later, capitalist relations made no impact on them at all.

The fact that Russian capitalism drew the small nationalities into its orbit was objectively progressive. In 1914 Lenin wrote: "Besides tsarism and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, viz., Great-Russian capitalism, which is carrying on progressive work by economically centralising and welding together vast regions."<sup>1</sup>

The vast Russian empire was a complete economic organism, of which Siberia and the North were inseparable elements. Their historical and social development was linked with Central Russia.

Economically, tsarism oppressed the natives by imposing the *yasak*—tribute—collected in sables, squirrels, foxes, polar foxes, ermine and later in money. This tax-in-kind prevailed until the beginning of the 20th century because, as Karl Marx pointed out, "this form is quite adapted to furnishing the basis for stationary social conditions"<sup>2</sup>.

P.A. Slovtsov, who specialised in the history of Siberia, distinguished three kinds of *yasak*: "1) tax—10 sables from married men and 15 from bachelors; 2) tithe—one out of every ten fur skins; 3) the act of deference (*poklonny*)—depending on the free will and assiduity of the giver in respect to the tsar's person".<sup>3</sup>

The *yasak* was collected by elders and chiefs who arbitrarily increased the amount fixed by the state. The amount thus differed from tribe to tribe.

The *yasak* was collected in a ruthless manner. Governors and state servitors kept the most respected clansmen as hos-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, 1959, p. 776.

<sup>3</sup> P. A. Slovtsov, *Istoricheskoye obozreniye Sibiri* (An Historical Survey of Siberia), Book 1, St. Petersburg, 1886, p. 18.

tages, and the sum of the *yasak* in sable or fur fluctuated according to the degree of their nobility. In return for the furs, they gave the natives a variety of trinkets so as to abide by the official instructions to collect the *yasak* "by kindness and not by coercion"—meaning that the natives were not to be beaten with sticks.

At the turn of the 20th century, the economic position of the natives in the Yenisei North worsened because of the extermination of the fur-bearing animals. In the 17th century, Mangazeya supplied up to 40,000 sables a year as compared with only a few hundred in 1913; in 1810 Turukhansk territory supplied 1,119,000 rubles' worth of furs, in 1913 the sum dropped to 318,000.<sup>1</sup> The extraction of the *yasak* also declined.

The *yasak* was an undisguised form of colonial plunder. Lenin wrote: "The possibility of oppressing and robbing other nations perpetuates economic stagnation, because the source of income is frequently not the development of productive forces, but the semi-feudal exploitation of non-Russians."<sup>2</sup>

A group of merchants specialised in buying furs. "Procurers go to remote settlements and exchange gunpowder, lead, flour, tea, sugar, tobacco, fabrics, hardware, vodka and other necessities for furs. This barter is highly disadvantageous to the hunters. The procurers frequently encourage the population, particularly the natives, to drink. The latter are virtually held in bondage. The goods and vodka are of the lowest quality, and they are mostly advanced for the future gamebag. The hunters and trappers are always in debt, and their debts increase from year to year even passing from one generation to another"<sup>3</sup>.

Officials and governors representing the tsarist government in the northern region, robbed the natives no less than did the usurers and procurers. The governors were appointed for two or three years at a stretch, and during that time

<sup>1</sup> G. N. Tarasenkova, *Turukhanskii Krai. Ekonomicheskii obzor s istoricheskimi ocherkami* (Turukhansk Territory. Economic Review and an Historic Essay), Krasnoyarsk, 1930, pp. 37, 259.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> *Aziatskaya Rossiya* (Asian Russia), St. Petersburg, 1914, Vol. II, p. 378.

they did their best to enrich themselves. Officials extorted sable and other furs for themselves as "presents". The Tungus who lived near Lake Yessei, for instance, had to give the officials 20 or 30 sables as "presents" in addition to the *yasak*. "If the hunting was bad, and the Tungus failed to supply sable, they were beaten to death with rods or put in stocks and irons".<sup>4</sup>

Drinking was encouraged in every way. Vodka or the tsar's "fire water", as the natives called it, brought enormous profits. The natives paid 15 rubles for a bucket of vodka and got only 1 or 1.40 rubles for a sable.

Drinking was widespread under tsarism, actually it was an element of state policy.

Merchants, usurers, governors and officials, as well as local rich people ruthlessly exploited the natives and robbed them blind. Because of the colonial yoke and commercial exploitation, the peoples of the North, who were short of implements for procuring their sustenance, were in dire economic straits. On the eve of the October Revolution, the situation was tragic. The natives were on the verge of extinction. One historian who made a trip to the Yenisei North wrote: "There is no more pitiful sight than that of the famished remnants of those who once made up sturdy, brave and numerous tribes, but who are now sometimes driven to cannibalism from hunger."<sup>5</sup>

Even the birth of children ceased to bring joy. Tungus mothers cried over the cradle: "Why have you entered the world of taiga, the realm of sorrow? You will never know the taste of meat, your body will never feel the warmth of a fur blanket, your heart will not rejoice at the sight of the free waters of Katanga, your face will never be lit with a smile, your eyes will be full of anguish."

For ages the peoples of the North were isolated from the outer world, from the high road of social progress. Tsarism and the imperialistic bourgeoisie with their harsh colonial policy are to be blamed for the backwardness and humiliation

<sup>4</sup> V. Ogorodnikov, *Russkaya gosudarstvennaya vlast i sibirskie inorodtsy XVI-XVII vekov* (The Russian State Power and the Siberian Aborigines in the 16th and 17th Centuries), Irkutsk, 1923, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> *Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar Granat* (Granat Encyclopedic Dictionary), Vol. 38, Article on Siberia, pp. 512-13.



of these peoples. For many centuries they obstructed the development of the peoples of the North.

But even in those severe times the progressive people of Russia knew that a new life for the peoples of the North would come. The Decembrists (organisers of a revolt for constitutional government against the Emperor Nicholas I on his accession in December 1825) who were exiled to the Turukhansk territory, Yakutia and Barghuzin observed with bitterness the sufferings of the Tungus people. The Decembrist V. K. Kyukhelbeker, Pushkin's friend at the Lycée, wrote about the wonderful Tungus women and children.

Pushkin's wish that the time would come when his name would be pronounced by the wild Tungus has come true.

### 3. Social Relations and Culture

The social system and social relations of the peoples of the North were commensurate with the primitive level of production.

Soviet scholars have come to the conclusion that the peoples of the North at the beginning of the 20th century were experiencing the disintegration of the primitive communal system.

Frederick Engels said that "the gentile constitution... presupposed an extremely undeveloped form of production, that is, an extremely sparse population spread over a wide territory, and therefore the almost complete domination of man by external nature, alien, opposed, incomprehensible to him.<sup>1</sup> But although the degree of decomposition was different, yet on the whole these peoples, as Karl Marx noted, had not torn themselves away from the umbilical cord of "primordial community"<sup>2</sup>.

The social system of the peoples of the North on the eve of the October Revolution can be characterised as a transi-

onal stage between a primitive and class society. The economy was in a state of transition from natural economy to commodity production. The peoples of the North were living in a semipatriarchal-semifeudal period, i.e., in the transitional period from a classless to a class society.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the clan organisation was at the last stage of disintegration. The clan was no longer the basic cell of the social organisation. The clan society, founded on blood relations, gave way to the territorial-adjacent or village community which, according to Karl Marx, was "the first social amalgamation of free people unconnected by blood relations" but which at the same time was "the last phase or the last period of the archaic formation".<sup>1</sup>

The subsequent development of the productive forces and the penetration of commercial relations, as well as the inclusion of the peoples of the North in the all-Russia market system, disrupted patriarchal-clan relations and stimulated social and property stratification. Gradually, there emerged a group of local rich exploiters who began to seize the best pastures, hunting and fishing grounds. Thus, by the beginning of the October Revolution communal ownership of land was supplemented by private ownership, but the latter was not predominant.

The appearance of private ownership alienated the individual (independent) producer from the community (collective), disintegrated the natural economy, provided condition for the small-commodity production, and initiated class relations. The family became the basic unit of social organisation among the peoples of the North. In this connection, Frederick Engels pointed out that "the monogamian family became a power and rose threateningly against the gens".<sup>2</sup>

The subsequent development of the productive forces became the source of enrichment for individual families and provoked the disintegration of the clan system. It was precisely this factor that disrupted primitive social relations and caused the social and property stratification of the members of communities.

<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 19, S. 403.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 320.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

A small but powerful group of families began to seize the basic implements and means of production, including land, pasturelands, hunting and fishing grounds; they increased their stocks of fowling-pieces, nets, boats, herds of reindeer and dog packs. The individual family began to produce more than it needed for consumption, the surplus became an economic lever for bringing the other members of the clan under their authority. The result was a division into rich and poor.

The evolution of private property disrupted clan relations and class society appeared. Frederick Engels wrote that "in this manner the organs of the gentile constitution were gradually torn from their roots in the people, in gens, phratry and tribe, and the whole gentile order was transformed into its opposite: from an organisation of tribes for the free administration of their own affairs it became an organisation for plundering and oppressing their neighbours; and correspondingly its organs were transformed from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for ruling and oppressing their own people. This could not have happened had not the greed for wealth divided the members of the gentes into rich and poor; had not 'property differences in a gens changed the community of interest into antagonism between members of a gens'".<sup>1</sup>

The clans were disappearing. A new period of social and economic development—the period of the formation of class relations, sharp social controversies, division into rich and poor with all the ensuing consequences—was setting in.

Class differentiation was most evident among the reindeer-breeders. The number of reindeer owned by each family varied sharply. Some families owned up to 8-10,000 head, while the majority had few animals or none at all. The rich reindeer-breeders forced them to look after their herds. According to the census which was conducted in 1926-27 in the arctic regions, 3.2 per cent of all families owned 42.7 per cent of the reindeer in the North.<sup>2</sup>

In Taimyr, 72 families, or 6.5 per cent of the total number of households, owned 73,600 reindeer (63 per cent) while

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> M. A. Sergeyev, "Narody Severa" (Peoples of the North), *Bolshaya sovetskaya entsiklopedia*, Vol. 41, Moscow, 1939, p. 235.

the rest of the population had only 43,100 animals (36.9 per cent). Reindeer-breeding brought more revenue to the prosperous families than to the poor. For example, in Baikit and Tungus-Chun districts of the Evenk National Area the former derived 40.5 to 41.1 per cent of their incomes from reindeer-breeding, while the latter derived only 5.9 to 8.7 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Rich people among the settled Ostyaks-Samoyeds, Kets and, to some extent, Tungus, whose basic occupations were hunting and fishing, seized the best grounds, pasturelands and the principal means of production. The local exploiters, having at their disposal the required transport facilities (draught-reindeer) began to act as commercial middlemen; they bought the necessities from Russian merchants and sold them to the poor hunters and fishermen at jacked-up prices, making great profits from such operations.

There were various forms of economic dependence of the toilers on the local rich men, including patriarchal-semifeudal, consisting in the direct appropriation of the fruits of labour of others, and various forms of feudal and capitalist exploitation (the direct and open employment of labour, but on a very limited scale).

Thus, there was a considerable stratum of the wealthy in the Yenisei North who exploited their kinsmen under the cover of patriarchal relations. Mostly, these were large-scale reindeer-breeders who acted concurrently as middlemen. They made wide use of patriarchal-clan relations. There were several forms of concealed exploitation of the poorest segments of the population. One of them was the joint pasture of reindeer belonging to the poor and the rich. Usually, 1,000-4,000 animals in a joint herd belonged to a kulak, while the poor had only 5 to 10 animals. In the case of Evenks, the joint pasture was regarded as a custom of kinsmen who lived and roamed together. Poor kinsmen and their families did all the work in the herds of the rich. Thus, on

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Popov, *Taimirsky natsionalny okrug (Ekonomiko-geograficheskaya kharakteristika)* (Taimyr National Area. Economic and Geographic Characteristics), Leningrad State University, 1955, p. 199; N. M. Konovvazin, V. M. Krilov, *Ocherki po promislovomu khozyaistvu i olenovodstvu Krainego Severa* (Essays on the Industries and Reindeer-breeding in the Far North), Leningrad, 1936, p. 33.



the pretext of joint pasturage, the rich mercilessly exploited and enslaved the poor.

Another form of exploitation was "aid" given the poor from the rich. Local exploiters gave their reindeer to the poor for the hunting season, but the latter had to compensate in furs. For instance, Yegor Silkin, who owned 3,500 head of reindeer, compelled the poor hunters to pay him one polar fox for each reindeer he lent them; in addition, the poor had to roam the tundra with him and do all the work for him.

Very close to this form of aid was the granting of fowl-ing-pieces, gunpowder, lead, foodstuffs and other necessities on credit. In this case, the rich acted as middlemen. Since the poor were short of reindeer for independent trips to trade posts, they were forced to give the furs to the rich who took them along to the trading stations.

These credits served as a twofold extortion: the rich paid the lowest possible prices for furs and demanded the highest prices for the commodities.

A widespread form of concealed exploitation was "sustenance to the dependants" and their families. This occurred when a poverty-stricken family lived with a rich man and worked for him; this was considered as tribal aid.

Many of the poor turned over their children or young brothers and sisters to the rich "for raising" them. But actually this "tutorship" was nothing but outright exploitation. Sometimes the poor even sold their children to the rich. For instance, Mikhail Kargachev sold his daughter to Bayaki for 25 reindeer. Quite often, a rich man, short of labour, would marry his sons, aged 13-15 years to poor women aged 20-25, whom, though they formally became members of the household, he exploited ruthlessly.

These concealed forms of exploitation covered over class contradictions and impeded the development of class-consciousness among the poor segments of the population. Under the guise of "tribal aid", the rich exploited the poor.

The existence of property stratification and class differentiation among the peoples of the North is reflected in the vocabulary. The Tungusic and Chukchi tongues, for instance, have special words to denote the property status of a man (poor man, rich man, prosperous man).

Local richmen—large-scale reindeer-breeders, hunters, fishermen and merchants—emerged as a result of differentiation among the peoples of the Yenisei North. Within this category we should also include the remnants of the tribal nobility—princelings, who were granted special rights by the tsarist authorities,—and the shamans, the unfailing advocates of the authority and power of the rich.

Consequently, there are no grounds at all to speak about a certain community of interests or of aspirations among all segments of the Northern society. On the one extreme there were the poorest segments of the population who bore the full burden of colonial and class oppression, on the other there were the local rich, the exploiters, who were supported and nourished by tsarism.

So, on the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution the social system among the peoples of the North was in transition from a primitive communal to a class society. Property and class differences were taking shape inside the territorial community. The rich exploiters who came to the forefront among the peoples of the North began to seize the reins of power. The clan elders were retreating before the local rich and princelings. The chief (or the princeling) ruled over non-related as well as related tribes.

Gradually, kinship clans lost their importance and turned into purely administrative clans.<sup>1</sup>

According to the census taken in 1926-27, there were 19 tribal groups on the territory of the present Evenk National Area. They all belonged to the Tungus people and spoke one language which, though, had many dialects; they lived in the basins of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska and in adjacent territories.

Certain economic relations were established between tribes and between clans. Developing commodity-money relations penetrated into the autarkic natural economy of individual clans and tribal groups and strengthened the economic relations between them. For instance, the tribes from the

<sup>1</sup> For example, the suffixes "gir", "kil" and "char" denoted the affiliation with a definite clan—Kombagir, Khiragir, Emidakil, Khukochar. The former names of clans have now become family names of Evenks.

Nizhnyaya Tunguska exchanged their reindeer products for furs with the tribes of the Podkamennaya Tunguska. These tribal groups were in fact territorial alliances which had not discarded all their clan relations.

Frederick Engels wrote the following concerning clan society: "There can be no poor and needy—the communistic household and the gens know their obligations towards the aged, the sick and those disabled in war. All are free and equal—including the women."<sup>1</sup>

One of the documents of the Krasnoyarsk Committee for the North points out that "the clan relations inside the clan have almost completely disappeared but they are still manifested in the prohibition of marriages within one and the same clan".

Though at the time under consideration the peoples of the North had gone through the stage of clan organisation survivals of it persisted for a long time. The authority and power of clan chiefs (princelings) were quite considerable.

However, as Lenin pointed out, "there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, the community itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan".<sup>2</sup>

I.M. Suslov, Chairman of the Krasnoyarsk Committee for the North, recalled that in 1925, while travelling in the lower reaches of the Yenisei, he witnessed the first elections to the clan Soviet in Golchikha. The Samoyeds unanimously nominated and entreated Yegor Silkin, the former clan princeling and at that time a very rich reindeer-breeder, to work in the Soviet.

Silkin had a big herd of reindeer, the poor were economically dependent on him. His authority as the clan chief was backed by economic might—ownership of reindeer, dogs and rifles.

The local rich, princelings, *shulengs* and shamans served as tsarism's social base for exploiting the working people. Cooperation between tsarism and local exploiters found ex-

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 475.

pression in the Regulations for Administering Non-Russians adopted in 1822 and which was in force with slight modifications right up to the October Revolution.

The Regulations divided the indigenous population of Siberia into three principal categories commensurate with their civic position and way of life: 1) settlers, 2) nomads and 3) wanderers.

The peoples of the North were placed in the third category which, as the Regulations stated, included "rovers or trappers who wandered from place to place along rivers and over hunting grounds".

The roving non-Russians had to pay the *yasak* to the tsar's treasury. Usually, rich and influential clan princelings were appointed headmen. The Regulations said: "All non-Russians who hold honorary titles among their kinsmen... retain these titles and enjoy the honours they are entitled to by custom and by steppe law." This considerably strengthened the economic power of the local nobility.

The elder wore a big medal with a chain on his breast. He proclaimed to his kinsmen the orders of the tsarist administration and presided in the court.

The Regulations for Administering Non-Russians embodied the policy and interests of the autocratic-feudal government, legalised the domination of tsarism over the peoples of the North and Siberia, and reflected the collaboration of tsarism with the upper crust of the native peoples for the joint exploitation of the toiling masses. That was the political and class substance of the Regulations. At the same time the Regulations attempted to adapt the common law of the aborigines to the laws of the Russian empire ("to allay barbarity and ruthlessness, to repeal everything that is incongruous with other acts").

The forms of administration did not correspond to the distinctive life and customs of the North. The people did not take part in administration. In fact, it was a system of colonial oppression.

The peoples of the North were governed through clan elders and clan boards subordinated to local administrations (*uprava*) for the non-Russians. The latter unified one or several clans of one and the same nationality. These bodies were administrative rather than strictly clan organs.



In the Yenisei North there were 34 administrations for non-Russians—14 for Tungus, 10 for Samoyeds, 2 for Dolgans, 4 for Ostyak-Samoyeds, 3 for Yeniseians, and 1 for Yakuts.

Such administration for the non-Russians was headed by an elder or princeling appointed by the Governor of the Yenisei territory. His principal function was the collection of the *yasak* for the treasury.

The tsarist officials, merchants and local rich who sat on the administrations pursued a policy of national and class oppression of the toiling natives.

A police department was set up for the Turukhansk territory which since 1822 was incorporated in Yenisei Gubernia with its centre in Krasnoyarsk. The senior officer of the police department (*pristav*) concentrated in his hands all the administrative and judicial power, and in point of fact he was the sole administrative authority for the vast Turukhansk territory. Besides his specifically police functions he controlled the local organs of self-government (peasant societies and administrations for non-Russians) set up for appearances.

The colonial authorities did nothing to encourage economic or cultural development, a fact explaining the unbelievable backwardness of the territory, particularly among the native peoples. The officials in the administrative organs were absolutely mistrusted by the toiling masses.

The situation in the Turukhansk territory was characterised by a historian in the beginning of the 20th century in the following words: "The administrative system in the North of Yenisei Gubernia is shocking. The lives of the native people have been put into the hands of a band of criminals consisting of the local Turukhansk administration and dealers, united by their common interest in exploiting the native population, who act under the guise of law and authority because the territory is so secluded and remote. The local administration and dealers hold sway over the soul and body of the native. . . . It is not surprising that under the existing system of administration in the Turukhansk territory. . . the outrageous facts of mass extinction from epidemics and—more terrible in their consequences—starvation, vodka, bribery and ghastly exploitation will serve

as a vivid example of our government's attitude towards the aliens in the North of Siberia."<sup>1</sup>

Such was the system of administration in the vast Turukhansk territory.

Thus, on the eve of the October Revolution the indigenous population of the Yenisei North had no single social organisation of any kind. They were extremely scattered, they lived in isolated clan and tribal communities or groups consisting of kindred or non-kindred clans which had not yet been developed into nationalities.

The social relations and interests among the peoples of the North were restricted by the boundaries of the clan or tribal organisation. All who fell outside these boundaries were regarded as strangers or "impostors".

Frederick Engels wrote: "The tribe remained the boundary for man, in relation to himself as well as to the outsiders: the tribe, the gens and their institutions were sacred and inviolable, a superior power, instituted by nature, to which the individual remained absolutely subject in feeling, thought and deed."<sup>2</sup>

Patriarchalism typified human relations. Exploiters and shamans impressed on the people that the rich and poor were kinsmen, that the rich helped the poor—their assistants—in times of need, that only the rich could manage the economy efficiently and only they could rule the people. Thus the social self-consciousness of the toiling masses was overshadowed by vestiges of primitive relations.

The spiritual culture of the peoples of the North was shaped by their material life. On the one hand, it reflected the extremely backward conditions of life and production, on the other, it illustrated the great creative talents of the people and their ability to produce the means of livelihood in spite of the severe natural conditions.

A realistic conceptualisation of the outer world was engendered by both labour activity and the surrounding envi-

<sup>1</sup> *Veliky Oktyabr i malye narodnosti Severa* (The Great October Revolution and the Small Peoples in the North), Transactions of the A. I. Herzen Leningrad State Pedagogical Institute, Vol. 353, Leningrad, 1967, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 267.

ronment. It was precisely in this sphere that the peoples of the North had accumulated an abundance of practical knowledge passed down from generation to generation. It is generally accepted that they had excellent knowledge of the topography and nature of their native land—its relief, rivers and lakes, climatic and meteorologic conditions, the seasons, the flora, etc. They were unsurpassed experts on hunting and fishing.

Northern realistic notions also encompassed the norms of common law regulating labour activities, public life, family relations, relations between neighbours, etc. However, the low level of the development of the productive forces and the inadequate labour experience could not but negatively affect their social consciousness. Backward and oppressed, they could not explain many natural phenomena which they regarded as mysterious and incomprehensible. The confrontation with the forces of nature, the helplessness and awe instilled by its elements generated false, supernatural and fantastic notions.

People attributed all natural phenomena to the existence of spirits, they believed that success and failure depended on the mood of good or evil spirits, and they therefore tried to win the latter's goodwill. They sacrificed animals to achieve various purposes. These concepts were reflected in tales and legends<sup>1</sup>.

Ages of hard and sometimes ruthless struggle for survival against the elements shaped the character of the peoples of the North. The difficult conditions failed to crush them, on the contrary, they developed industriousness and ability to overcome all hardships. Natural gifts and talent, kindness and honesty, boundless optimism and humour even in the most hazardous situations are the principal features of every native Northerner. The Tungus have a saying: "Death is mighty but not mightier than life." Work and

<sup>1</sup> See *Skazki narodov Severa* (Tales of the Peoples of the North). Compiled by M. G. Voskoboinikov, G. A. Menovshchikov, Moscow-Leningrad, 1959; *Istorichesky folklor evenkov. Skazania i Predania* (Evenk Historical Folklore. Stories and Legends). Recordings, translations and commentary by G. M. Vasilyevich, Moscow-Leningrad, 1966. These folklore genres are literary monuments of national art.

a deep knowledge of the taiga and the tundra, which they read as an open book, gave them great vitality.

The word "labour" was prominent in the vocabulary of the peoples of the North. The Tungusic language contains many words for denoting man's attitude towards work. The industrious man, particularly a good hunter, always enjoyed respect. The Tungus said: a poor worker cannot be a good man.

The peoples of the North are friendly and sociable. A. L. Chekanovsky, an outstanding explorer of northern Siberia, had two Tungus for his guides, Pyotr and Gole Kaplins. They shared with him the joy and difficulties of a journey through the taiga. He wrote of them: "On the whole, the Kondogirs (i.e., the Tungus of the Kondogir clan—*U. U.*) repay attention given to them with genuine loyalty; so, friendship, once born, is usually lifelong."<sup>1</sup>

The trustfulness and good nature of the peoples of the North bordered on naïveté. Theirs was the psychology of a primitive society. Merchants and tsarist officials were quick to profit by it. Each Tungus had his own merchant whom he trusted completely and whom he regarded as a friend and benefactor. But once caught in cheating, the merchants lost trust for good. There is a saying that the Tungus can be cheated only once.

The peoples of the North had an egalitarian system of distribution. Its roots were deep in the clan traditions of mutual assistance under which not a single member of the clan was left without the support of his kinsmen. Gradually, as the clan relationships withered away, this form of mutual assistance developed into egalitarian distribution as such. The Tungus called it the *nimat*, the substance of which consisted in the hunter presenting the hide of the bear, wild deer or elk to a distinguished guest or to a member of another clan, while the meat he divided among his kinsmen. No one was forgotten and no one went hungry. When an animal was shot, it was a festive occasion because it meant meat for all. However, there were loafers and hangers-on who profited by the *nimat*.

<sup>1</sup> *Sbornik neopublikovannykh materialov A. L. Chekanovskogo* (A Collection of Unprinted Articles by A. L. Chekanovsky), Irkutsk, 1962, p. 193.



The Tungus had an interesting rite—the *singken*. It was quite involved, but a closer study of it gives us a glimpse of the hoary past and throws light on the formation of the world outlook of this people. The *singken* was a quest for fire as the hunter prepared to set out. The Tungus firmly believed that without this rite there would be no success because *singken* was related to the goddess of fire, while fire—*togo*—was supposed to be the lord of the taiga. Before partaking of his meal, the Tungus would throw a greasy morsel of meat or pour fat into the fire, believing that for this “present” *togo* would bring luck.

On festive occasions, the Tungus had the *yokhorye* ring-dance. The men stood in a circle and hopped after the leader, echoing the words of his song. The tempo grew quicker and quicker, until only the staunchest remained. They were the victors. The leader, usually a respected person, sang about the past winter, the hunt, the sorrows that befell the clan or news from other clans. The songs were alternately mournful or joyful, they warmed the hearts and instilled optimism for a better life in the future.

The peoples of the North, including those of the Yenisei North, were animists. They believed that all objects which surrounded them had souls, that nature was inhabited by spirits, good or evil, who could influence man's destiny.

Lenin revealed the social roots of religion. He pointed out that “fear made the gods” and that the helplessness of the primitive man “in his battle with nature gives rise to belief in gods, devils, miracles, and the like”.<sup>1</sup>

The Tungus gave a common name to these spirits—the *sevhen* which could include animals, birds, fish, reptiles or any other creature. Many of them were venerated as the ancestors of the clans or tribe and worshipped as idols (totems). The most venerated was the bear, whom the Tungus regarded as the ancestor of man. The legends and stories depicted him as the first living being on earth, the progenitor of man. The bear taught people to use fire and implements.

The bear has more than twenty different names in the Tungusic language, the most familiar of which is the *amaka* (grandfather). The cult of the bear was quite sophisticated.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 406 and p. 83.

The bear hunt was preceded by rites, dances and invocations; and a commotion was created in imitation of birds and animals so that the bear would not discover his real killer. Once the bear was killed, the hunters apologised and asked him not to hold a grudge against them because it all was an accident. The chase was followed by festivities, and the spoil was regarded as the common property of the clan.

Other venerated totems included the elk, the wild reindeer and the domestic reindeer. They also have dozens of names.

Ethnographic studies have revealed that the Tungus clans received their names from various totems. In the past, for instance, the Kurkogir clan was known as the Dyukugir, a derivative from the word *dyukun* (the otter). Other examples abound: the Kirektel clan is a derivative from the word meaning the woodpecker, the Mukto is a derivative from musk deer, and the Putugir is a derivative from the word denoting a species of wild duck.

At the turn of the 20th century, totemic ideas took the form of primitive religion known as shamanism. Shamanism has certain distinctive features. Rites were carried out by shamans whom the Tungus and the other peoples of the North regarded as the earthly agents of spirits, as the “chosen ones”. The rites were well established. It was believed that during the *kamlanye*, the shaman communicated with the spirits. The rituals, the vestments, the tambourines and other cult accessories were prescribed by tradition. The *kamlanye* was conducted in special *chooms* (tents).

The shamans were respected and enjoyed certain privileges. The people tried to win their favour in every way—by looking after the animals and lending a hand in hunting and fishing. The best pasturelands, hunting and fishing grounds were given to the shamans. Since the shaman was looked upon as the “chosen one”, as the mediator between men and spirits, he was considered to be endowed with supernatural powers, accordingly people came to seek his help when in trouble. They brought gifts of sable, squirrel and other game.

Though the shamans were not professional servitors of the cult, and though they had no centre or any organisation, yet their influence was great. They were the guardians of the

most stagnant, archaic notions and traditions. Their reactionary role increased in pace with the break-up of the tribal system, the division of the people into the rich and the poor and the subjugation of the latter to the former. Shamans became supporters and henchmen of the exploiter upper crust—the clan princelings and the rich. They robbed their kinsmen and strengthened the authority and rule of the powers-that-be, i.e., the rich and the tsar's colonisers. So, shamanism was an ideology hostile to the toiling masses, an ideology of exploitation which took root in the soil of primitive society.

The annexation of the peoples of the North by Russia was followed by their conversion to Christianity. At the turn of the century the tsarist government resorted to force. The conversion to Christianity was quite intensive.

When baptised, the converts were given Russian Christian names; the name of their clan became their family name. This is why many people of the North have Russian names. But until quite recently, they also had their own national names.

Russian missionaries waged a war against the shamans, seized and destroyed their tambourines and other cult accessories; sometimes they chased the shamans out of their native places. The priests appointed the converted Tungus and Yakuts as church elders in order to increase the influence over the population.

But in spite of all their attempts, Christianity failed to penetrate deeply into the hearts and minds of the indigenous population. The people only outwardly observed religious ceremonies and the worshipping of the icons. As a result, there developed peculiar syncretism of age-old animistic-shaman ideas and elements of Christianity.

They believed that the Russian "god" Mikola—St. Nicholas—was more powerful than their tribal god. But the shamans explained it this way: the Russian god does not always help, particularly in hunting, because he knows nothing about it, while the shaman gods are reliable assistants in the hunt.

Poisoning the minds of the people, Christianity, like shamanism, served to strengthen the rule of tsarist officials and the local rich.

The Evenk language belongs to the Tungusic-Manchu stock of languages, which is divided into two groups—the northern and the southern. The northern group incorporates the Tungusic language proper, and the Lamut, Negidal and Solon languages. (The Solon language is spoken in the Mongolian People's Republic.) The southern group incorporates the Gold, Ulchi, Orok, Udeghei, Orochi, as well as the Manchu and Sibir languages.

The Dolgan language, which can be regarded as a dialect of Yakut, belongs to the Siberian Turkic group. The Yenisei language is tentatively placed in the Paleo-Asiatic group, but its lexicology and grammar are very peculiar. The languages of the Samoyeds, Entsi and Tavgi are classified in the Finno-Ugric-Samoyedic family. Usually, they are referred to as Samoyedic languages.

In the system of agglutinative languages, Tungusic is of particular interest. It may be divided into three dialects—northern, southern and eastern—and 35 isoglosses.<sup>1</sup>

Just as is the case with many other peoples of the North, the Tungusic language abounds in words denoting various notions connected with hunting, fishing and reindeer-breeding, i.e., notions directly connected with productive activities. For instance, the common term *oron* refers to the domestic reindeer, but in addition there are more than 30 words denoting the reindeer in accordance with its colour, sex or its application in the labour process.

The basic vocabulary of the peoples of the North is, however, very poor. It has very few words to denote abstract social and economic ideas, production activities and spheres foreign to their way of life (agriculture, cattle-breeding, industry, transport, etc.).

The basic vocabulary was replenished after annexation by Russia, and most of the new words were loans from the Russian language. The assimilation of new words was an indication of the growing knowledge and outlook of the peoples of the North.

Family and matrimonial relations corresponded to the primitive stage of social and economic development. Though

<sup>1</sup> V. A. Gortsevskaya, *Ocherki istorii izucheniia tungusko-manchurskikh yazikov* (Essays on the History of the Studies of Tungusic-Manchu Languages), Leningrad, 1959.



the monogamous family was widespread, there were many cases of polygamy and levirate.

The *kalim* for the bride had to be paid throughout the North. It was paid in reindeer, furs or various goods; the poor had to work it off.

The *kalim* was burdensome. For instance, one Tungus, Kergeli Pankagir, made Ivan Simonchin pay him 300 squirrel pelts, 20 reindeer and 10 calves for his daughter.

The following story from the past, as reported by Nikolai Delyubchin, a Tungus, was printed on November 7, 1937, in the *Evenkiiskaya Novaya Zhizn*: "Kumalanov, a poor man, worked for Yakuni, a rich man, just because the latter gave him for a wife a woman whom he purchased as a workhand. Kumalanov worked for 20 years, and his wife and later his son also worked for Yakuni. All that they got was food. The furs were taken away by Yakuni."

Polygamy was usually found among the rich.

The lot of women was heavy. They bore the burden of not only national-colonial and class, but also of ignoble family oppression.

Tungus men said that women were like "imperfect children". According to custom, women were not allowed to gather with men.

On November 7, 1944, Yevdokia Sochigir, a collective-farm woman, told in the *Evenkiiskaya Novaya Zhizn* a story depicting the plight of Evenk women before the revolution: "Women had no human rights, their husbands could beat them at will without fear of interference. They lived in constant dread of shamans, princelings, sickness, wild beasts, and husbands. Women were bought and sold."

Culturally, the peoples of the North were extremely backward. On the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution the people were illiterate, there were no schools instructing in the native tongues, no medical, cultural or educational institutions, allocations for education were miserly, the peoples of the North had no literature or written languages of their own.

According to the census of 1926-27, not more than 2.1 per cent of the population in the North was literate; nomads were completely illiterate, less than 0.5. per cent of women could read and write.

Schools were few and most of them were meant for Russian children. In Turukhansk territory there were only three Russian schools. True, an attempt was made in 1901 to open a school for non-Russians, orphans and children from poor families in Turukhansk. At first, there were 15 pupils—5 Tungus, 7 Ostyaks and 3 Dolgans, but soon, in 1905 the school was closed.<sup>1</sup>

In 1913 only 3,000 rubles (6.4 per cent of the territory's budget) were allocated for education in Turukhansk territory. The existing schools offered only the most elementary education. The teachers were mostly priests with a poor education and with little interest in tutoring. Many of them bought furs and resold them for a profit. The local population rather than respecting the teachers resented and feared them by dint of the way of life they led. In the past, it was commonly held that the natives of the North feared three things worse than fire—sealed documents, conscription and schools.

Even in those difficult times there were many enthusiasts who enlightened the natives. One of them was M. M. Suslov, a teacher in a Turukhansk mixed school for Russian and native children. He compiled a Russian-Tungusic and a Russian-Ostyak dictionary which worked for a better understanding between the Russian and native population. He defended the natives against tsarist authorities and merchants.

Before the revolution there were no cultural establishments in the Yenisei North at all. The people received no medical aid. In the Turukhansk territory there was only one hospital, in Turukhansk itself, and 3 medical stations for the Russian population.

One doctor was responsible for an area of 120,000 square versts with a widely-scattered population of 29,000; moreover, there were no adequate transport facilities.

The natives were afflicted by measles, smallpox, anthrax, tuberculosis and trachoma. Epidemics carried away hundreds of lives. During the smallpox epidemics in 1850-51 the toll was 545 out of 965 stricken Tungus (56 per cent). P. Tretyakov, a Siberian explorer, wrote that "the non-Rus-

<sup>1</sup> SANR, fd. 1, f. 413, l. 25.

sians, terrified by the death toll of smallpox, abandon their *chooms* and on swift reindeer fled to the most remote places in the hope of escaping from inevitable death, but death follows in their footsteps and strikes down the fugitives in the sledges. This is how people are dying in the distant and gloomy land, rousing no compassion."<sup>1</sup>

In 1908-09 smallpox swept over the whole of Turukhansk territory and exterminated many clans of Samoyeds, Tungus, Ostyak-Samoyeds and Dolgans. Fridtjof Nansen, who visited the Yenisei North in 1913, depicted the tragedy thus: "A few years ago smallpox was so violent that the local doctors were left completely helpless. The inhabitants of most *chooms* lay dead inside, reindeer which had failed to break free, perished from starvation and lay around the *chooms*. A few people were found in the *chooms*, but they were in the most miserable condition, half-dead from hunger and cold, covered with suppurating sores. . . . How many similar tragedies are concealed in the boundless tundra!"<sup>2</sup>

The toiling people of the North fought against the *predatory collection* of the *yasak* by the tsarist administration, against plunder and coercion, and also against growing exploitation by the local rich; they time and again rose against the oppressors.

In 1683, two clans of Essei Tungus staged an uprising. No longer able to bear the arbitrary rule of headmen and officials, they killed several Cossacks and a tax-collector. At approximately the same time, the Tungus who roamed along the Kheta and Khatanga rivers rose against the representatives of the tsarist administration. But the uprising was fiercely suppressed and the whole clan annihilated.

A major uprising, headed by Vauli Nenyang (Piettomini) took place in 1825-41. Having broken out in the Taz tundra,

<sup>1</sup> P. Tretyakov, "Turukhanskii krai" (Turukhansk Territory), *Transactions of the Russian Geographic Society*, 1869, Vol. II, Book 3, p. 341. A similar tragic story was told by the historian S. Patkanov: "Horrible non-Russians rushed for the forests, but death overtook them, the taiga was strewn with corpses, whole *chooms* perished to a man, attracting the wolves" (*Transactions of the Russian Geographic Society*, 1906, Vol. XXXI, Part 1, Issue 2, p. 72).

<sup>2</sup> F. Nansen, *In the Land of the Future. The Great Arctic Route from Europe to Siberia via the Kara Sea*, St. Petersburg, 1915, p. 168 (in Russian).

it soon involved Yenisei Samoyeds. Vauli wanted to free the natives from the yoke of tsarist officials and the local rich. His immediate aims were to cut prices on fiscal flour and the commodities sold by Russian merchants, raising at the same time the prices on furs so as to improve the life of natives. Vauli's uprising against the local exploiters, tsarist officials and merchants was in essence a national-liberation movement of the peoples of the North. But because of poor organisation and betrayal by the upper stratum of the clan, the revolt was fiercely suppressed.

No attempts by the peoples of the North to free themselves from the national yoke could have been successful, it was only the Great October Socialist Revolution that once and for all put an end to national-colonial regime.

The difficult and dreary life under tsarism made a deep impression in the memory of the peoples of the North. The *Evenkiiskaya Novaya Zhizn* printed the following story by an 80-year-old Evenk, I. M. Chapogir: "Those were hard times. Evenks were dying out. One spring 30 families perished near Lake Ekonda. . . . The princeling demanded taxes, what remained the rich took from the poor under all kinds of pretenses. The poor man had no alternative but to work for the rich." "I am 73, and I have seen and experienced much during my long life," F. Botulu, a collective farmer, recalled. "Three tsars followed in succession, each more ruthless than his predecessor, and each of them robbed us."

The following story is by G. I. Petrovsky, a worker-deputy to the Fourth State Duma, who was exiled in 1915 to the Monastirskoye village (now Turukhansk): "The tsarist government used the territory only as a place for exiles. It gave the merchants a free hand for robbing the local population. We bitterly watched as Russian and foreign merchants bought furs, eiderdown and fish for a song. For two polar foxes or twelve squirrels, for instance, they gave only a pood (16 kg) of rye flour. The Evenks, Kets, Selkups and other peoples in the North had no rights at all, they were illiterate. The merchants encouraged them to drink vodka, the shamans stupefied them with religious dope, the officials and police extorted bribes."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, July 29, 1956.



For centuries the colonial regime kept the peoples of the North in the primitive state, depriving them of even the slightest benefits of civilisation.

Patriarchal social and economic relations were encouraged and conserved by tsarism and the bourgeoisie; they conducted a harsh colonial policy.

However, we must not confuse the policy of the ruling classes of Russia with the position of the Russian toiling people.

It was not the Russian people, but the ruling classes—the landlords and the bourgeoisie—that conducted a reactionary policy, oppressed and robbed the northern peoples, contemptuously regarding them as subject peoples.

The Russian revolutionary democrats A. I. Herzen, V. G. Belinsky, N. G. Chernyshevsky and A. N. Dobrolybov condemned the regime of robbery and coercion established for non-Russians. They vigorously protested against equating the Russian people with tsarism which was pursuing a policy of national oppression in the interests of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. "Those who are incapable of distinguishing between the Russian government and the Russian people," A. I. Herzen wrote, "do not understand anything."<sup>1</sup>

The key to a correct assessment of the position of the peoples of the North before the revolution can be found in Lenin's works. He pointed out: "There are two nations in every modern nation—we say to all nationalist-socialists. There are two national cultures in every national culture. There is the Great-Russian culture of the Purishkeviches, Guchkovs and Struves—but there is also the Great-Russian culture typified in the names of Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov."<sup>2</sup>

The tsar's satraps brought on countless calamities to the toiling masses of Russia. "To us," wrote Lenin, "it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the tsar's butchers, the nobles and the capitalists."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. I. Herzen, *Complete Works and Letters*, Vol. 1, St. Petersburg, 1915, p. 320 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 103.

For ages the Yenisei North or the Turukhansk territory served as a place of exile for the progressive peoples of Russia. Representatives of all three stages of the Russian liberation movement spent their period of exile in Turukhansk.

In one village alone—Monastirskoye—there were more than 300 exiles in 1906-14. Political exiles were to be found all over the vast territory, particularly along the Yenisei.

After the defeat of the first Russian revolution the number of exiles sharply increased.

Many prominent leaders of the Communist Party—I. F. Dubrovinsky (Innokenti), A. A. Maslennikov, Y. M. Sverdlov, and K. T. Novgorodtseva-Sverdlova, S. S. Spandaryan, J. V. Stalin, A. G. Shlikhter, V. N. Yakovlev and others—were deported to Turukhansk territory, considered one of the worst places of exile. It took great moral strength to endure the hardships and unbelievable deprivations.

But these hardships and deprivations could not break the will of Lenin's followers. They firmly believed in a better future. In 1919 Lenin remarked that Y. M. Sverdlov's life is typical of the life of people who have seen the inside of many prisons and have been in exile in the remotest regions of Siberia, of the life of leaders, the flower of our proletariat.<sup>4</sup>

On July 5, 1915 a group of former Bolshevik deputies to the Fourth State Duma—G. I. Petrovsky, A. E. Badayev, M. K. Muranov, F. N. Samoilov and N. R. Shagov—sentenced by the tsar's court, arrived in Turukhansk and multiplied their forces.

Y. M. Sverdlov was exiled to Turukhansk territory in 1913. He met with Tungus, Ostyak-Samoyeds, Yenisei Ostyaks and collected interesting material in the economic and social situation in the territory. In his articles and essays, Y. M. Sverdlov outlined the history and economy of the territory.

"The local population," he wrote in one of the articles, "lives under the yoke of various merchants who purchase their fish and furs. The 'knights of the primitive accumulation' do not disdain to use any means—vodka is so far the

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 91-92.

principal of them—to strengthen and perpetuate the yoke. It is easy to understand that the deeper we go into the territory, into the tundra, the more intense becomes the exploitation, the uglier its forms. Barter is dominant. Fish and furs are exchanged directly for commodities. The prices for local produce are low, but the prices for all commodities are exorbitant.”<sup>1</sup>

In January 1917, Y. M. Sverdlov and other exiled Bolsheviks sponsored the inauguration of the Force in Unity Consumer Co-operative in the village of Monastirskoye.

The spring of 1917 brought joyous news of the approaching storm. On March 4-5 rumours of the downfall of the tsar reached the exiles in spite of attempts by local authorities to conceal the report about the February revolution.

The exiles conferred where Y. M. Sverdlov lived and decided to arm themselves and seize power.

The Bolsheviks, headed by Y. E. Bograd armed themselves with rifles and pistols, approached the police officer and ordered him to tell the truth about the events in the capital. The officer admitted that a revolution had taken place, and he was compelled to resign his commission.

The Cossacks, guards and other representatives of the tsarist administration were disarmed, the police officer was arrested. In the appeal to the population it was declared that all power in Turukhansk territory was assumed by the Soviet headed by the exiled Bolsheviks.

The members of the Soviet were A. A. Maslennikov (chairman), Y. E. Bograd, D. I. Dolbeshkin and K. T. Novgorodtseva-Sverdlova. A. A. Maslennikov was appointed Commissar of Turukhansk territory, Y. E. Bograd was appointed his deputy.

The Bolsheviks in Turukhansk began to explain to the local population the meaning of the events. The Soviet took stock of food and commodities in the state warehouses and in the hands of merchants. It was prohibited to purchase fish and furs at prices lower than those fixed by the Soviet. That was done primarily in the interests of the indigenous population.

<sup>1</sup> Y. M. Sverdlov, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 47.

The Soviet established strict control over the consumption of food and commodities. Taking into account the difficult economic situation of the toiling population, particularly of the native peoples, the Soviet decided to distribute 15,000 poods of flour as a long-term credit.

D. I. Dolbeshkin, a member of the Soviet, travelled to all settlements, even as far as Dudinka, and told the people about the revolution. On his return, he reported to the Soviet on the results. Later D. I. Dolbeshkin wrote: “While reporting to the Soviet on my trip to Dudinka, I focussed attention on the exceptional interest with which the local population, particularly the Evenks, met the news that tsarism had been overthrown. The Evenks accompanied me to other faraway camps, simply to hear once again of the overthrow of tsarism and how to build a new life.

“That was the fruit of lengthy work carried out among the local population. We cited concrete examples of how the merchants, the priests and other henchmen of autocracy were exploiting them.”<sup>1</sup>

Prosperous people and merchants eyed with suspicion the new authorities and hoped that everything would return to “normal”, but the poor people fully supported the revolutionary government and assisted it.

After the February revolution, the Bolsheviks launched a campaign for attracting the people to their side. In Siberia, the campaign’s headquarters became the Middle Siberian District Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) which began to form independent Bolshevik organisations.

During the election campaign to the Constituent Assembly, Bolsheviks in Turukhansk territory demanded immediate measures for the protection of the political and economic interests of the native population and the granting of equal political rights.

Bolshevik propaganda work among the broad masses brought good results: the Bolshevik candidate—V. N. Yakovlev—won 1,400 out of 1,700 votes of the electorate.

<sup>1</sup> D. Dolbeshkin, “Na Severe dalnem” (In the Far North), *Borba za Ulast Sovetov v Yeniseiskoi Gubernii* (Collection of Articles The Struggle for Soviet Government in Yenisei Gubernia), Krasnoyarsk, 1958, pp. 36-37.



Strong Bolshevik organisations were set up in Yeniseisk district in July-September 1917. The Middle Siberian District Bureau of the CC RSDLP (B) was preparing the population in Yenisei Gubernia for the armed uprising.

Under Russia, the peoples of the North have forever bound their destiny with the destiny of the Russian people, with the destiny of its advanced class—the Russian proletariat and its vanguard—the Communist Party.

The Russian proletariat headed the struggle of the oppressed peoples for liberation from national and social oppression.

The Communist Party and Lenin, its founder and leader, pointed out the only correct road to national liberation for the oppressed peoples.

The Communist Party has always linked the liberation of the oppressed peoples of Russia with the principal task of the working class—the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and a socialist system. This is essential for the liberation of the oppressed peoples from capitalist slavery. Only the proletarian revolution headed by the working class, guided by the Communist Party can fully solve the nationalities problem and the age-long problem of cooperation between nations big and small.

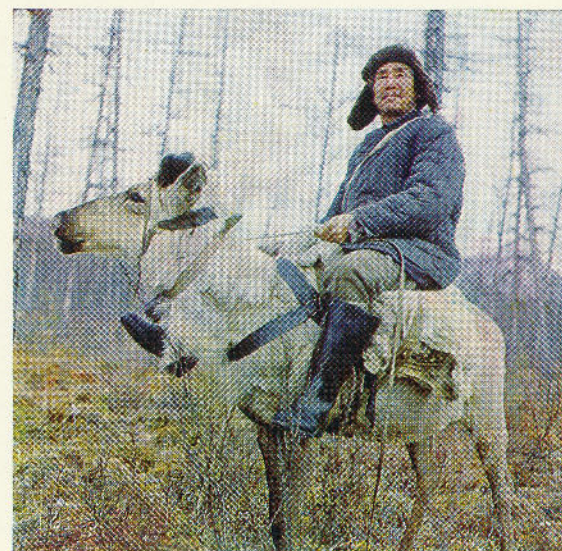
As early as 1905 Lenin wrote: "We have always taught that it is the class struggle, the struggle of the exploited part of the people against the exploiters, that lies at the bottom of political transformations and *in the final analysis* determines the fate of all such transformations."<sup>1</sup> The working class—the solely consistent revolutionary class—in alliance with the poorest peasantry is capable of accomplishing the proletarian revolution which emancipates the oppressed peoples from the colonial yoke. The working class does away with strife, squabbles and national oppression and brings with it unity among all nations and races.

Lenin adjured the Russian working class to bear in mind its oppressed and unfortunate brothers—the border



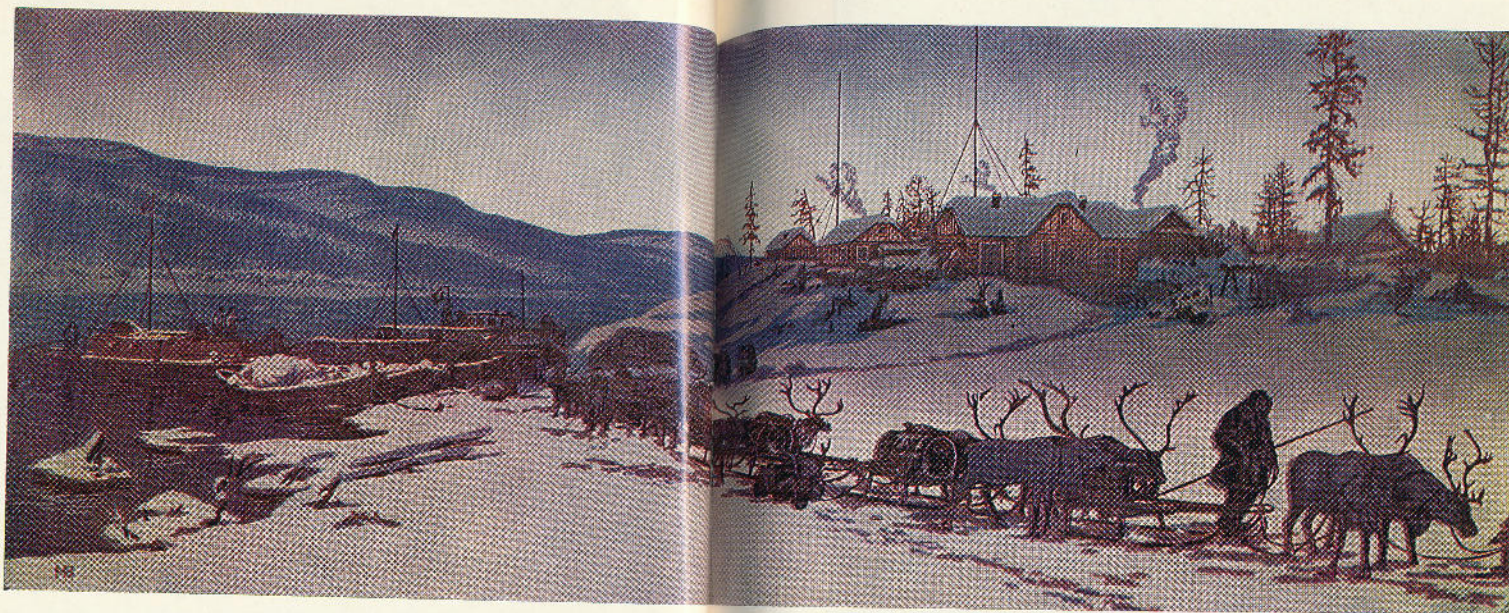
Nina Botulu teaches geography and history in a secondary school in the settlement Tura

The reindeer-breeder A. V. Mukto was granted a high reward in acknowledgement of his outstanding work—the Order of the October Revolution

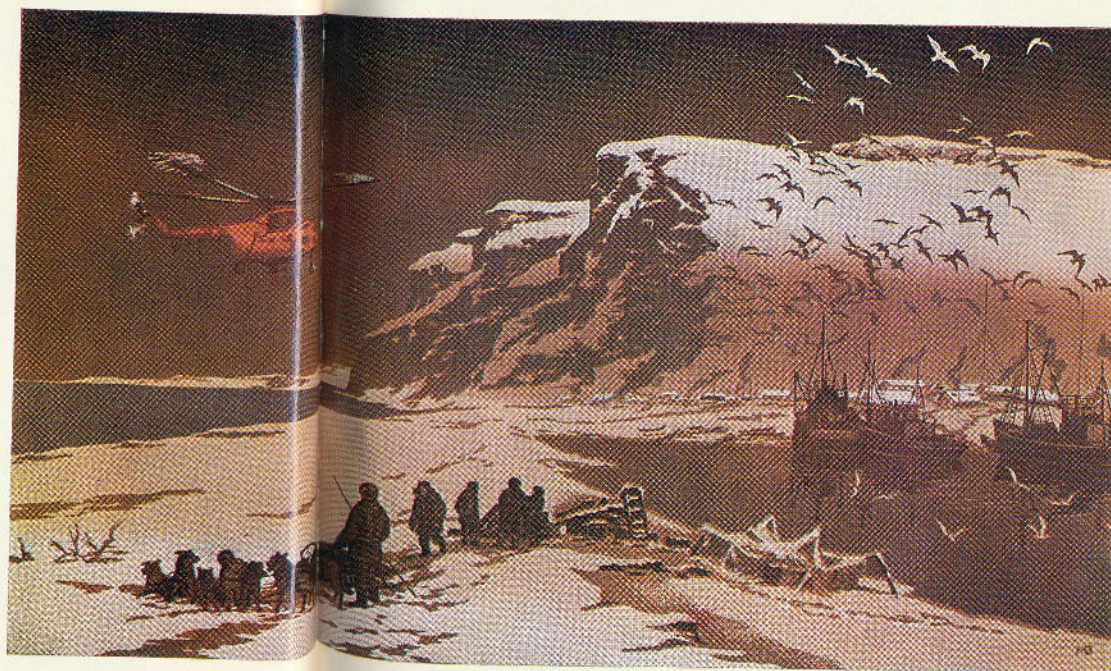


<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 204.



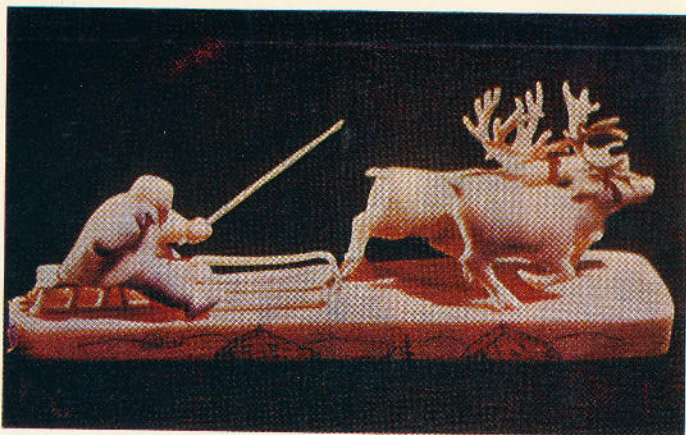


V. Meshkov. Trade post in Tungusk



V. Meshkov. The shore of the Kara Sea





G. Tatso. Reindeer Team. 1969. Ivory

Dolgan man's cap. 1960s. Detail



peoples of the Russian empire. He wrote: "Amidst the alarms and turmoil of the struggle for existence, for a bare livelihood, the Russian workers cannot and must not forget the yoke of national oppression under which the tens and tens of millions of 'subject peoples' inhabiting Russia are groaning. The ruling nation—the Great Russians—constitute about 45 per cent of the total population of the Empire. Out of every 100 inhabitants, over 50 belong to 'subject peoples'.

"And the conditions of life of this vast population are even harsher than those of the Russians."<sup>1</sup>

Having taken to lead in the national liberation movement of the non-Russian peoples and having prompted them to join the Great Socialist Revolution, the Russian working class, for the first time in mankind's history, succeeded in eradicating capitalist slavery. Having accomplished this, the Russian working class has justly won for the Russian people the right to be regarded as the guiding force for all peoples of the USSR.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 237.



## From the Tribal System to Socialism

### 1. The First Social and Economic Measures

... With the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

V. I. Lenin

For the first time in history, the Great October Socialist Revolution put an end to the rule of landlords and capitalists, destroyed the system of exploitation and established the dictatorship of the proletariat. A new type of state—the Soviet socialist state—was born.

Alongside the principal questions—power, land and peace—posed by the revolution, the nationalities question occupied a prominent place in the activity of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government.

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which met in session on the day of the triumphant armed uprising, released a proclamation to "Workers, Soldiers and Peasants", announcing the victory of the socialist revolution. The proclamation, written by Lenin, declared that Soviet power "will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination."<sup>1</sup>

The Congress instituted within the first Soviet Government a People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities—a special organ for the practical implementation of the Soviet Government's nationalities policy.

The historic Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 247.

Russia proclaimed the basic principles for the solution of the nationalities problem:

1. Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, including separation and the formation of independent states.

3. Abolition of all national and national-religious privileges or restrictions.

4. Free development of national minorities and ethnic groups, inhabiting the territory of Russia.<sup>1</sup>

It was the supreme act of political emancipation of the formerly oppressed peoples and a document setting forth the basic principles of the Soviet state's nationalities policy.

The waves of the socialist revolution soon reached distant and multitribal Siberia.

On October 28, 1917, early in the morning, the *Krasnoyarsky Rabochi* announced in a special issue the victory of the armed uprising in Petrograd. By October 30 the Krasnoyarsk Soviet established full control in the town. The revolution was victorious and Soviet power was established.

In Yeniseisk the news of the victory of the proletarian revolution arrived on October 28. The Yeniseisk Uyezd Soviet met in an emergency session at 2 o'clock in the night. The announcement that power had been taken by the Bolsheviks in Petrograd was met with joy. The session adopted a resolution on the transfer of power to the Soviet in the uyezd. The Soviet declared: "To outlaw the Committee for Public Security, to disband the troops of the local garrison and to organise the Red Guards."<sup>2</sup>

This signified that the socialist revolution had triumphed in the Yenisei North.

The practical establishment of Soviet power in Turukhansk territory was, however, a protracted process due to the departure of many Bolsheviks who had lived there while in exile. The government fell into the hands of Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

<sup>1</sup> *Dekrety Sovetskoi vlasti* (Decrees of Soviet Power), Vol. 1, October 25, 1917-March 16, 1918, Moscow, 1957, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> YSA, fd. 250, reg. 1, f. 5, l. 16.



In conformity with the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, the Yeniseisk People's Commissariat proclaimed that all non-Russians, inhabiting the north of the gubernia, were accorded equal rights with all the other nationalities. The Regulations for the Administration of Non-Russians of 1822 were declared null and void. Thus the document, which for nearly a hundred years had had the force of law and which expressed the interests of tsarism and its colonial policy, lost all meaning.

The proletarian revolution immediately and absolutely destroyed the colonial regime, deprived of all power tsarist officials, outsiders (merchants) and local exploiters (princelings, shulengs and shamans) and established Soviet power in the taiga and tundra once and for all. The Yeniseisk Gubernia Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies unflinchingly abided by the Leninist nationalities policy.

The working people of Turukhansk territory wholeheartedly welcomed the establishment of Soviet power. In April 1918 the *Krasnoyarsky Rabochi* reported that in Turukhansk territory "peasants of whole *stanoks*<sup>1</sup> are passing votes of confidence for Soviet power. Some *stanoks* have already recognised Soviet power". It was a triumph of Soviet power about which Lenin spoke frequently with great pride.

The victory of the socialist revolution and the establishment of Soviet power was bitterly opposed by all counter-revolutionary forces throughout the country. Imperialist states also made numerous attempts to interfere with armed force. A special place was assigned to Siberia in the plans of foreign interventionists for subjugating Soviet Russia. American, British and Japanese imperialists wanted to use it as a springboard for dealing a decisive blow to the young Soviet republic. But what attracted the foreign capitalists most of all were the tremendous food and raw material resources in Siberia.

On May 25, 1918 the Anglo-Franco-American imperialists incited the Czechoslovak mutiny. The treason of the

<sup>1</sup> *Stanok* was the name given to habitations of settlers, mostly Russian.

Czechoslovak Corps put into power the counter-revolution and placed in its hands the whole length of the Trans-Siberian Railway. The gains of the revolution were seriously threatened.

On June 18, 1918 the Soviet power in Krasnoyarsk fell and counter-revolution triumphed for the time being. The peoples of Siberia, led by the Communist Party, began a heroic struggle for liberation.

The foreign imperialists, acting through their puppet, Kolchak, established a colonial regime in Siberia. They robbed its vast natural and raw material resources and terrorised the population. Lenin pointed out that "Kolchak represented the dictatorship of the very worst exploiters, a plunderous dictatorship of landowners and capitalists which was worse than that of the tsar".<sup>1</sup>

The position of the working people under Kolchak was extremely difficult, but the destiny of the small peoples in the Far North was really tragic. On June 29, 1919 the *Zhizn Natsionalnostei* newspaper noted that "the peoples of Siberia are groaning under the spurs and whips of Kolchak's punitive and requisition squads.... There is no bread, no light, no education". Kolchak's army requisitioned cattle from the Buryats and the East-Baikal Tungus. In February 1919 Ataman (Cossack general) Semyonov ordered the mobilisation of the East-Baikal Tungus into the army.

The peoples of the North received no economic aid. They had no food and no ammunition for hunting.

During the imperialist war and the rule of Kolchak, the economy in the North was completely ruined. Coercion and extortion were practised on an unprecedented level. The *yasak* was doubled<sup>2</sup>. All principal branches of the economy—reindeer-breeding, trapping, and fishing—were spoiled. The number of reindeer declined precipitously. The hunters had no traps or munitions, their rifles stood in need of urgent repair but there were no facilities. Trappers were idle.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> CSAOR, fd. 1318, reg. 1, f. 993, l. 5.

The local hunters, deprived of rifles and munitions, once again resorted to the bow and arrow. The degradation of the fur industry greatly undermined the material position of the population. The catch of fish in Turukhansk territory was considerably reduced.

During the years of Kolchak's rule the price on fur fell while prices for necessities went up by two or three times. The merchants bought valuable furs for next to nothing or received them in exchange for vodka.

Kolchak's anti-popular policy placed the indigenous population of the North in a dire situation. At the end of 1919 the People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities reported: "All small ethnic groups are headed towards ruin, impoverishment and extinction. They suffer from unbelievable oppression and most cruel exploitation."

The working people of the North, guided by Communists, rose against the anti-popular regime of Kolchak and for the restoration of Soviet power. Uprisings and partisan movements were spreading in many places in the Yenisei North. In difficult and, it would seem, unbearable conditions of bloody terror, underground Bolshevik organisations never stopped even for a day the stubborn struggle against Kolchak; in so doing they forged the victory of Soviet power.

The Bolsheviks prepared in utmost secrecy for the revolt in Yeniseisk. It was staged during the night of February 6, 1919. Kolchak's government was overthrown, power was taken by the Provisional Revolutionary Headquarters of Bolsheviks. The uprising was supported by the workers of a timber factory and the peasants of the surrounding villages.

The Red Banner of the insurgents flew over Yeniseisk for 23 days. It symbolised the coming victory over the counter-revolution.

Soviet power in the Yenisei North was completely restored in the beginning of 1920.

A meeting of the representatives of working people of all *stanoks* was held in the middle of 1920. The Turukhansk Territorial Revolutionary Committee, which took all power in the territory, unified all revolutionary committees representing Soviet power in different localities.

The meeting sent a telegram to Lenin, Chairman of the People's Commissars, which read: "With the feeling of deep reverence for your achievements in the liberation of the working people, the Turukhansk territorial congress sends you warm greetings. It is ready to support you in the struggle for the consolidation of Soviet power."<sup>1</sup>

Work for the foundation and consolidation of the organs of Soviet power in Turukhansk territory was directed by the Party organisation which, in February 1920, had a membership of only 19 Communists.<sup>2</sup> After the restoration of Soviet power, the Turukhansk organisation of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) addressed an appeal to the population urging it to fight against the remnants of Kolchak's bands and to build a new, socialist life.

The appeal said: "For 18 months Siberia groaned under the boots of the tsar's generals and capitalists. The whole of Siberia was ruined and devastated. Assisted by the Mensheviks, SRs and mercenaries, the bourgeoisie drenched the land of Siberia in the blood of workers and peasants.... Hundreds of thousands of comrades and brothers fell at the hands of Kolchak's butchers...."

"We must remember that we, the Siberians, must all begin to build the new life, to build Soviet power and consolidate it."

The Soviet power in Turukhansk territory had to cope with the grave situation left after tsarism, the bourgeois Provisional Government and the Kolchak regime. The fur, fishing and reindeer industries were ruined. There were no transport or other means of communication with the centre. The indigenous population was dying out.

The food problem was the acutest of all. It had been utterly neglected by the Provisional Government and the Kolchak regime. To begin with, the Revolutionary Committee took stock of all available supplies. It fixed stable prices for salt and bread to protect the natives from profiteers. In the spring of 1920, the territorial revolutionary committee nationalised furs, food and manufactured goods held by the local merchants. Particular attention was paid to

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 1303, reg. 1, f. 46, l. 3.

<sup>2</sup> PAKT, fd. 27, reg. 1, f. 3, l. 35.



hunting and fishing as the essential means of livelihood for the natives and the working Russian population.<sup>1</sup>

In October 1920 the Revolutionary Committee sent a special expedition to the Big and Ilimpeya tundras to investigate the situation of the indigenous population.<sup>2</sup> The first steps taken by the Turukhansk Revolutionary Committee were of great political significance. These measures signified that the Communist Party and Soviet government as soon as it had crushed the Kolchak regime had taken up the political and economic problems of the people of the North and begun to introduce new, Soviet forms of life.

In November 1920 the Committee organised the Turukhansk special military detachment (CHON) for guarding the revolutionary order and wiping out the remnants of Kolchak bands which had fled into the taiga and the tundra. The nucleus of the detachment was made up of Communists. Many Tungus, Ostyak-Samoyeds, Dolgans and Samoyeds fought side by side with the Siberian partisans and helped to liquidate Kolchak bands. The local population supplied the partisans and the CHON detachments with reindeer sledges, warm clothes and food.

The First Territorial Congress of Soviets, held on December 25-28, 1920, in the village of Monastirskoye, became an outstanding event in the life of the working people of the Yenisei North. The Congress was attended by 55 delegates from 40 localities.

The Congress devoted much time to discussions of the food situation which was on the verge of catastrophe. As of August 1, 1920, the stock of grain amounted to only 40,000 poods instead of the required 135,000. No hardware, manufactured goods or other necessities were shipped in during 1920.

The Congress was fully aware that the population was starving because of the crop failure in many regions of the Soviet Republic, particularly in the Volga area. Accordingly it resolved: "To call upon the whole population of Turukhansk territory to remember that their brothers—the work-

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 1303, reg. 19, f. 28, l. 82; *Krasnoyarsky Rabochi*, December 11, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> SAKT, fd. 1303, reg. 1, f. 28, l. 77.

ers in towns, factories and industrial centres and the peasants in the afflicted areas of Russia—are starving, and therefore to be thrifty in the consumption of all foodstuffs, particularly of bread. To deliver all surplus fish, furs and other products and to fulfil their obligations before the Republic."<sup>1</sup>

The appeal found a warm response among the local population. Thousands of poods of meat, fresh and cured fish, and also many fur pelts were contributed to the hunger relief fund.

After a discussion of the report on education, the Congress reaffirmed the urgency of eliminating illiteracy and superstition among the local population, and asked gubernia Soviet organs to send teachers, doctors and specialists to the Yenisei North.

The Congress adopted with great enthusiasm the text of a telegram to the leader and founder of the world's first socialist state—Lenin. It said: "On behalf of workers, peasants and natives of the territory, we wish you complete success in the cause of world revolution and the construction of Soviets. On its part, the Congress has decided to spare no effort in consolidating the power of workers and peasants in the distant polar extremities of the Republic."<sup>2</sup>

The First Territorial Congress of Soviets decided to reorganise the Turukhansk Territorial Revolutionary Committee into the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

The First Congress of Soviets of Turukhansk Territory officially proclaimed victory over the Kolchak regime and the restoration of Soviet power in the vast expanses of the Yenisei North.

The Civil War and foreign intervention had greatly retarded the political and economic development of the peoples of the North.

A new stage in the historical development of the peoples of the North set in after the restoration of Soviet power. They took the non-capitalist road of development which was indicated by Lenin.

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 49, reg. 1, f. 802, l. 5.

<sup>2</sup> SAKT, fd. 259, reg. 1, f. 167, l. 42.

Lenin's name is revered by every Soviet citizen. People on all continents and in all languages pronounce it with pride and love. Lenin's name is the symbol of the new world, the world of socialism and communism, it is the incarnation of the loftiest ideals and aspirations of the toiler.

Lenin's name is particularly revered by the formerly oppressed and backward peoples who have now attained an unprecedented level of social development. Lenin illumined the road to freedom and happiness for the peoples of the North. Lenin is not only the leader and teacher of the small nations, he is their saviour from physical extinction. They owe their very existence to Lenin and the Communist Party he founded. Lenin chartered the historical course for the peoples of the North to socialism and drew up the programme for developing the productive forces of the North.

Lenin's great ideological legacy is immortal and invincible. It contains the answers to the basic questions of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into socialist society, it contains the programme for building socialism and the solution of the nationalities question in a multinational state.

One of the most important problems of the nationalities programme, theoretically worked out by Lenin and practically implemented by the Communist Party, is that of the non-capitalist road of development for the formerly backward peoples, and their transition to socialism without passing through the stage of capitalism.

Marxism-Leninism teaches that the development of mankind is a single process and that its conformity to historical laws is exhibited in the consecutive succession of social-economic systems. However, Marxists-Leninists do not deny that in specific and concrete conditions some peoples and countries can by-pass certain social-economic systems or stages of development. Lenin noted that "while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the forms or the sequence of this development".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 477.

Such an opportunity rises when the preceding system outlives itself and ceases to play a progressive role in the development of society, while the emerging new system opens the opportunity for certain peoples, still at the lower stages of social development, of by-passing this moribund social system. For example, many tribes of eastern Slavs and many nomadic peoples of Asia and Africa did not pass through the slave-owning system and entered feudalism directly from the primitive commune. The peoples of North America and Canada escaped feudalism altogether.

At the same time, in the course of development some peoples can, due to various reasons, remain at a certain stage of development or retain a certain system for quite a long time. The example is provided by the peoples of the North who until the victory of the October Revolution remained at the stage of patriarchal-clan relations. Some peoples in Africa, Oceania and the North outside the Soviet Union even today retain patriarchal-clan relations.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific communism, provided the thesis about the possibility for the non-capitalist road of development for backward countries. They believed that the main prerequisite for the transition to socialism, in such cases, would be the victorious proletarian revolution in the developed capitalist countries. Frederick Engels said that "only then these backward countries would be able to take the road of such a shorter process of development. But then they will be guaranteed success. This is true not only of Russia but of all countries which are at the pre-capitalist stage of development".<sup>1</sup>

Long before the victory of the October Revolution, Lenin elaborated the main provisions concerning the non-capitalist road of development for backward peoples and countries.

While in exile in Siberia, he completed his great work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899). Lenin's conclusion that as the market takes form capitalism develops vertically and horizontally, is of great methodological significance. Lenin was the first among Marxist writers to apply the term "non-capitalist countries". He wrote: "What is

<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 22, S. 428-29.



important is that capitalism cannot exist and develop without constantly expanding the sphere of its domination, without colonising new countries and drawing old non-capitalist countries into the whirlpool of world economy."<sup>1</sup> Here we have the key to Lenin's teaching about the non-capitalist road of development following both historically and logically from the socio-economic development of Russia and the world historical process as a whole.

Lenin's thesis about the development of capitalism horizontally is of principled significance for the elucidation of the influence of capitalism on the socio-economic development of the national border areas of Russia. Lenin delineated with unerring accuracy the position and place of the national border areas in Russia. The development of the national border areas, including Siberia, was inseparably bound to the development of Russia as a whole, to the historical destiny of the Russian people, and to the history of the Russian liberation movement.

The development of Russia after the reform reinvigorated the vast territory of Siberia which began to slowly and painfully creep towards capitalism. However, industrial capitalism did not succeed in spreading to the distant outskirts of Siberia itself, particularly in the Far North. Only merchant capital made headway there. Though at the turn of the 20th century Central Russia had entered the imperialist stage, the national regions in Siberia were still at the pre-capitalist stage of development. In this connection, Lenin wrote: "In the case of Russia it would be wrong to present imperialism as a coherent whole (imperialism in general is an incoherent whole), since in Russia there are no few fields and branches of labour that are still in a state of transition from natural or semi-natural economy to capitalism. Backward and poor though they are, they nevertheless exist."<sup>2</sup>

Earlier, Frederick Engels also called attention to this variety of socio-economic relations in Russia. In a letter to Vera Zasulich in 1885, he wrote that in Russia "every stage of social development is represented, from the primitive

commune to modern large-scale industry and high finance"<sup>4</sup>.

While working on the theory of the socialist revolution and while regarding oppressed people, carrying on a struggle for national liberation, as the allies of the working class, Lenin did not ignore the fact that socio-economic relations in multinational Russia were extremely complicated. He took fully into account the different political, economic and cultural levels of the peoples inhabiting Russia. In October 1916 in the article, *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism* Lenin wrote: "All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the doctrine of the non-capitalist road of development is a logical sequence to Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution and of building socialism and communism.

After the victory of the Great October Revolution, Lenin outlined a clear perspective for the development of the backward peoples. In his report to the Second Congress of the Comintern on the nationalities and colonial questions, Lenin drew the very important theoretical conclusion that after the victory of the socialist revolution the capitalist stage of development loses its obligatory character for some peoples. His argument was as follows: "Are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development". Developing this thought, Lenin further advanced the thesis to the effect that "with the aid of

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 593.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 24, p. 465.

<sup>4</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, p. 460.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, pp. 69-70.



the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage".<sup>1</sup>

The non-capitalist road of development for the backward nations and countries is a new historical law of social development, a law engendered by the victory of the socialist revolution. In 1921 Lenin said: "If 'we' are successfully to solve the problem of our immediate transition to socialism, we must understand what *intermediary* paths, methods, means and instruments are required for the transition from *pre-capitalist* relations to socialism".<sup>2</sup>

The Communist Party and Soviet power had to accomplish the most difficult but most humane task—that of drawing into socialism the peoples whom the advanced nations had outstripped in their development by thousands of years.

During the Civil War, Lenin paid great attention to the needs of the small peoples, he demanded of Party and Soviet organs that they take into strict account the concrete conditions in the national border areas. One of the paragraphs of the Appeal to Workers, Peasants, Non-Russians and Toiling Cossacks of Siberia said: "In respect to the non-Russian population of Siberia, the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia which gives all nations the right to determine their future themselves is reaffirmed... The lands actually used by non-Russians shall not be further limited or cut in any way, they shall be put at their complete public disposal. If there be a shortage of land for the non-Russians and if there be free land funds in the adjacent neighbourhood, the latter shall be allotted to the non-Russians". On August 14, 1919 the Appeal was approved by a session of the Council of People's Commissars and published in *Izvestia* above the signature of V. I. Lenin, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, and M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the All-Union Central Executive Committee.

The Appeal played a great role in the mobilisation of the working people of Siberia for the successful struggle against Kolchak.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 349.

When Kolchak had been routed and Soviet power in Siberia restored, the Communist Party took urgent steps for the political, economic and cultural development of the peoples of the North. The principle applied in this work was that a new life was to be built by the people themselves. It was a new policy, that of the proletarian state, distinct in its very essence from the colonial policy of tsarism.

This principle follows logically from Lenin's position that "we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action, even where a proletariat is practically non-existent".<sup>1</sup>

The North of the USSR is a virtually inexhaustible storehouse of natural wealth. Mikhail Lomonosov, the great Russian scientist, once predicted that "Russia's might will be multiplied by Siberia and the Northern Ocean".

Lenin's name is directly linked with the development of the Soviet North. It was his idea to develop and transform the North in the interests of socialism and to draw its vast natural wealth and resources into the country's economic life.

One of the first steps taken to investigate conditions in the Soviet North was the expedition to Yamal. The matter was examined on April 6, 1921 by the Council for Labour and Defence; two days later, on April 8, Lenin signed the decree which read in part:

"Proceeding from the urgent necessity of constructing the Great Northern Route from Siberia to Europe and our northern ports for the export of timber, grain, fish, meat, furs, fats, mineral and other resources... taking into account the state significance of Siberia, the Council for Labour and Defence DECREES:

"1. To instruct the All-Union Council for National Economy to arrange the Yamal expedition.

"2. To instruct the expedition to investigate:

- "a) the Yamal and then the Mangazeya-Turukhansk water routes;
- "b) approaches to them via the Ob, Baidara and Taz inlets;
- "c) the possibility of building a port at Cape Morra-Sale;
- "d) the possibility of building railways and transport routes over the local watersheds."

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 243.



The expedition was instructed to set up outposts, storage and trade stations, to establish radio communications, etc.

The scientific and technical department of the All-Union Council for National Economy called a special conference to assess the results of the Yamal expedition. The conference was attended by Academician A. E. Fersman and professors M. M. Novikov, I. V. Kuchin and V. N. Pereverzev. It arrived at the conclusion that "the work of the expedition was of primary significance for the economy of northern Siberia".

The Yamal expedition laid the foundation for the planned exploration of northern Siberia, its vast natural wealth and resources, and for the transformation of the life of the indigenous peoples. Academician Fersman was perfectly right when he noted in an article entitled "The Scientific Expedition to the Russian North" (*Izvestia*, December 25, 1921) that "in its study of the various organisational forms, the customs and the way of life of the natives in the North, the expedition regarded them as a productive force on which the new economy must rely".

Lenin paid great attention to the protection of the country's nature and its enormous natural resources. An exceptionally important role in this respect may be ascribed to the famous decree "On Hunting" which was discussed on July 20, 1920 by the Council of People's Commissars, with Lenin chairing, and also to the resolution on practical measures for supplying the population with food and hunting gear.<sup>1</sup>

In conformity with this resolution, direct exchange of commodities on an individual basis with the native population of the Siberian North was introduced from the beginning of 1921, as the most convenient form of trade, considering their nomadic way of life. This form of exchange consisted in delivery by the native population of goods derived from the hunt and from reindeer-breeding to the cooperatives, not in exchange for rubles but rather for definite equivalent units fixed by the appropriate provisioning organs.

<sup>1</sup> *Sobraniye zakoneni RSFSR* (A Collection of State Acts of the RSFSR), 1920, No. 66, Clause 297; CPA IML, fd. 2, reg. 1, d. 14747, l. 2; f. 15388.

For example, G. K. Nizovtsev, cooperative organiser in the Evenk area, reported that the fixed units for Tungus inhabiting the Podkamennaya Tunguska area equalled: 2 units for one squirrel, 15 for one polar fox, etc. Manufactured goods were valued in the same units: 3 for one pood of rye flour, 1 for a pound of sugar, etc.

Cooperative trading posts kept logs for each native family to preclude mistakes or swindling.

The resolution of the Council of People's Commissars became the basic document for establishing equal relations between the Soviet state and the native peoples of northern Siberia.

Lenin also paid much attention to the utilisation of the natural resources in the North. This can be seen from his remarks on a book by Academician Ipatyev entitled *On the Necessity of Organising the Manufacture of Electrodes from Turukhansk Graphite*.

Rich deposits of graphite have been discovered in Turukhansk territory in the middle of the 19th century. Academician Ipatyev asserted that the chemical composition of Turukhansk graphite makes it one of the best in the world.

Lenin wisely recognised the great importance of these deposits both for industry and defence. He drew attention to the importance of Turukhansk graphite for the electrochemical and metallurgical industries and for the manufacture of nitrogenous fertilisers and artillery shells. It was also an important export item, particularly after the establishment of trade relations with the capitalist countries.

The Siberia Geological Committee began to investigate in detail the Turukhansk deposits of graphite. In 1921 a geological expedition under S. V. Obruchev was sent to investigate the western boundaries of the Tungus coal deposits.

Subsequently, the deposits in the Nizhnyaya Tunguska became the site of the Noginsk Graphite Pit—which marked the initiation of the ore-mining industry in the Evenk National Area.

Of particular importance was the opening of navigation along the Northern Sea Route. In April 1920 the Siberian Revolutionary Committee inaugurated the special Northern Sea Route Committee.



Back in the difficult years of 1920 and 1921, the ships of the Kara Sea expeditions brought manufactured goods from the west to the mouths of the Ob and the Yenisei and took back furs, grain and other materials. The expeditions brought back 12 million rubles' (in fixed prices) worth of furs.

Lenin attentively followed the work of the Kara Sea expeditions. The development of the Arctic and of regular navigation along the Northern Sea Route represents the results of Lenin's plan for developing the natural wealth and resources of Siberia.

Decisive in the national resurgence of the formerly backward peoples of Russia was the daily and unselfish assistance offered by the Russian people and primarily the Russian working class.

Lenin clearly defined the role played by Russian officials in the national border areas of Russia. Once S. G. Said-Galiyev<sup>1</sup> asked him: "Is it a correct assumption that Communists of the formerly ruling nation, being at a higher level in all respects, must play the role of pedagogues and nurse-maids in respect to the Communists and all working people of the formerly oppressed nations?" Lenin replied: "Not 'pedagogues and nurse-maids', but helpers."<sup>2</sup>

History has demonstrated that without the help of the Russian people the formerly backward peoples of the Soviet Union, including the peoples of the North, could not have progressed from the clan order to socialism without passing through the stage of capitalism. At the 24th Congress of the CPSU, when assessing the exclusive role of the Russian people in the national resurrection of the non-Russian peoples, Leonid Brezhnev said: "The revolutionary energy, dedication, diligence and profound internationalism of the Russian people have quite legitimately won them the sincere respect of all the other peoples of our socialist motherland."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. G. Said-Galiyev (1894-1938), member of the Communist Party since 1917, Chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the Tatar Republic, and subsequently of the Crimean Republic.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 541.

<sup>3</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, 1971, Moscow, pp. 91-92.

How did the Russians, particularly Russian Communists, succeed in winning the overall respect and love of the other peoples?

It was because, as Pushkin said in his time, the Russian people "are neither grossly infatuated with or ignorantly disdainful of aliens". As Maxim Gorky said, the Russian people "everywhere, throughout the width and breadth of the Soviet Union act as stimulants and disseminators of socialist culture".

The Russian Communist entered the *choom* of the Evenk and the *yaranga* of the Nentsi as a friend and adviser, as the best assistant in building the new life.

Lenin was always concerned with the establishment of cordial relations between the Russian people and the oppressed nations, he bent his efforts to establish a strong alliance between the Russian working class and the working people of other nationalities. Events have fully corroborated that without the leading role and guiding activity of the Communist Party, founded and fostered by Lenin, the peoples of the North could not have caught up in their social-economic and cultural development.

The peoples of the North, resurrected to the socialist life by the Leninist Party, bear deep love and profound respect for Lenin. They link their present happy and joyful life and even a brighter tomorrow with Lenin's name.

Evenk legends insist that Lenin had visited Tunguska, met and talked with Evenks. Were it not true, how then could he have known Evenk life so well?—they ask.

In April 1930 a conference of Evenks sent a message to the Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR. It expressed reverence for Lenin and loyalty to the Party's great cause:<sup>4</sup>

"We, the Tungus of the North, of the Chuna-Taimyr-Kurkogir and Pankagir clans—181 people in all—have gathered on Lenin's birthday in the Strelka-na-Chune trading station for the *suglan*."<sup>5</sup>

"We are convinced that the Soviet power guided by the Bolshevik Party has taken, despite all difficulties, the correct course for socialist construction and for the defence of the USSR.

"We are confident that it will fully implement Lenin's behests and will not spare its efforts in rebuffing the onslaught of the enemies. In

<sup>4</sup> SAIR, fd. 2375, reg. 1, f. 28, l. 102-103.

<sup>5</sup> *Suglan*—general meeting (Evenk).



the whole world there is only one Party—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) which together with Soviet power defends the oppressed peoples.”

An entry to the same effect was made in the Guest Book in Lenin’s museum in Shushenskoye:

“We, excursionists and pupils from the schools in the Evenk National Area, have visited the museum home and the places where Lenin—the founder of the Soviet state and the leader of the world proletariat—was fond of relaxing.

“Today we are returning to the North, to the land of ‘eternal snow and eternal sufferings’ as pre-revolutionary writers called it. But they spoke of times long past.

“We, the children of Evenks, live a happy and joyful life. We enjoy broad opportunities to become engineers, teachers, flyers, etc.

“All that was given to us by the Communist Party founded by Lenin.

“Dear Lenin: we hold your memory sacred, and we shall study and work much better so as to be worthy Leninists.”<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the northern territories learned of Lenin’s death with great sorrow. In Turukhansk the news arrived on January 23, 1924. The Communists of the local Party organisation immediately gathered to hear the report on Lenin’s life and death by F. Y. Babkin, Chairman of the Territorial Executive Committee. The general meeting of Communists sent the following telegram to the Party’s Central Committee:

“The general meeting of the Turukhansk organisation of the Communist Party received at 3:40 a.m. the sorrowful news of the death of our beloved and dear comrade and teacher, Lenin. Our dear leader is no longer with us, but we swear to hold pure, in spite of all trials, his great teaching. . . . We will fulfil his great behests to the proletariat’s struggle against capitalism, with honour and dignity we will carry Lenin’s banner to the full realisation of communism.”<sup>2</sup>

This was an oath of allegiance to the great cause of Lenin, to the cause of the Communist Party.

## 2. The National-State System

A prominent place in the activities of the People’s Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities was occupied by work among the northern peoples to improve their econom-

<sup>1</sup> *Krasnoyarsky Rabochi*, April 19, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> PAKT, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 317, l. 5.

ic and material welfare. The national development of the peoples of the North was regarded as a task of the state as a whole.

It was necessary to take the following urgent steps: to protect non-Russians from any form of exploitation; take measures to ensure them against extinction; regulate the use of pastures, hunting and fishing grounds; protect native industries and game reserves; improve the economic position of non-Russians and enlist them in the general cause of Soviet Russia for building socialism with due regard for the specific conditions of their life.<sup>1</sup>

One of the documents of the People’s Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities says: “Their (the non-Russians)—*Ed.*) entire spiritual and economic culture is based on primitive communism.”

This document became the keystone of the Polar Sub-Department for the Protection and Administration of the Native Tribes in the North, set up in March 1922. One of its chief executives was A. E. Skachko, subsequently a prominent member of the Committee for the North. The Sub-Committee invited many prominent scientists—V. G. Tan-Bogoraz, S. I. Rudenko, S. A. Buturlin, A. Y. Sternberg—to take part in its work.

In June 1921 the board of the People’s Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities once again discussed the question of organising the administration for the northern peoples.

In conformity with the decision of the government of the RSFSR of October 30, 1920, it was decided to institute the office of authorised agent of the Nationalities Commissariat under the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, and to appoint to the office F. F. Yaichnikov. His principal task was to protect the rights and interests of native tribes on the basis of the community of interests of the working people of all nationalities inhabiting Siberia.<sup>2</sup>

On March 2, 1922 the Department of National Minorities of the Nationalities’ Commissariat submitted a memorandum on the position of native tribes, indicating that their

<sup>1</sup> CSAOR, fd. 1318, reg. 1, f. 142, l. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 7, l. 32; f. 2267, l. 18<sup>2</sup>.



basic pursuits were hunting, marine and river fishing, as well as reindeer-breeding.

The Far North is rich in mineral and other natural resources; in the early years of Soviet power, many foreign merchants moved surreptitiously into the Far North to tempt the natives with alcohol in exchange for sables, mammoth ivory, etc. A number of American schooners loaded with furs and ivory were discovered ice-bound in 1920 in the mouth of the Lena. The introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP)—legalising private trade—had an adverse affect on the natives by virtue of the unscrupulous filching and deceit carried out by private traders.

A conference of the representatives of the northern border areas of the Soviet Republic was called in July 1922 to draw up a programme for protecting and administering the tribes in the Polar North and for improving their cultural and economic position.

The conference was held in the village of Samarovo, Tobolsk Gubernia. It was attended by 6 delegates from the Ostyaks, 3 delegates from the Samoyeds, 2 from the Tatars, and one each from the Voguls and Ziryans. Delegates from the peoples of the Yenisei North failed to arrive because of transportation difficulties.

The decision adopted by the delegates said: "The first conference of the working indigenous peoples in the history of the Polar North laid the corner-stone of Soviet power on the barren shores of the Arctic Ocean, the Soviet government of toilers is leading the native peoples, forlorn and ruthlessly exploited for many centuries, to the road of emancipation".<sup>1</sup>

The conference played an important role in determining the organisation of national life for the native tribes in the northern areas of the Soviet Republic.

Guided by the directives of the Party's Central Committee, the Nationalities Commissariat did much to organise the national life of the northern peoples, to raise their material welfare, and to find the best approaches to economic and cultural development.

<sup>1</sup> CSAOR, fd. 1318, reg. 1, f. 994, l. 146.

The *Zhizn Natsionalnostei* (Life of Nationalities) newspaper of the Nationalities Commissariat systematically printed reports discussing the life of the Siberian natives. On March 4, 1921, the newspaper said: "The correct national policy in Siberia can soon turn the natives, who account for half of the population of the territory, into active supporters of Soviet power, and disseminators of the ideas of socialist and communist construction."

Initially, the massive work of constructing socialism in Siberia was directed by the Siberian Bureau (Sibbureau) of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), inaugurated in December 1918, and by the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, set up in August 1919 by decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

The Sibbureau set up a Sub-Department for National Minorities while departments for national minorities were set up in Party gubernia committees. Further, nationalities departments were set up under the Siberian Revolutionary Committee and the gubernia executive committees. All in all, there were 6 gubernia and 9 uyezd nationalities departments in Siberia, and a total of 100 nationalities departments in 20 gubernias of Russia as a whole.

Difficult and complicated problems stood in the way of building socialism.

"Patriarchism thrives among the natives of the North," observed a report made in 1920 by the nationalities department of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee. "They are still at the state of a natural economy. The approach to the native people must be cautious; it is necessary to find the vital nerve which would help to attract them to communism and bypass the stage of capitalism."<sup>1</sup>

There were other difficulties as well: many peoples lived too far away from habitable places, industrial and cultural centres; there were virtually no means of communications; the economy and culture were extremely backward and isolated from the remainder of the country; there were nearly no cadres of native origin. The fact that there

<sup>1</sup> SANR, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 413, l. 22.



were wide inter-tribal differences in customs, traditions, languages and modes of production ensured further complications, only worsened by the traditional mistrust of everything Russian generated by the colonial policy of tsarism and by vestiges of Great-Russia chauvinism exhibited by certain Russian officials.

In the course of 1920 the Siberian Department for Nationalities took the first steps to politically organise the native population of the North and to improve their economic welfare. The norms for supplying the native peoples with food and other essentials were raised. Later, the Siberian Foreign Trade Bureau arranged individual commodity exchange with the natives. This step improved the supply of goods and protected them from speculative elements.

In the course of 1921 some 425,000 poods of flour were sent to Siberia designated for commodity exchange with the natives; in 1922, 200,000 poods of flour were brought to Turukhansk and Naryn territories, averting famine conditions.

More than two million rubles' worth of food and manufactured goods were sent to the north of Siberia in 1920-22.

Anthrax caused havoc among reindeer herds in 1921-22. Nearly a third of the reindeer perished. The Siberian Land Department sent veterinary workers to Yakutia and Turukhansk territory to combat the epidemic.

Studies were made of the ethnic composition, social and legal systems of the indigenous peoples. This, of course, was only the beginning of the major effort subsequently undertaken by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government for national resurrection. It did, however, provide the corner-stone for the construction of socialism in the vast expanses of the Soviet North.

The task was to convince the native peoples that Soviet power was their own power to be applied in the defence of their own interests.

A conference of representatives of the peoples of the North was convened in March 1921 in Omsk to discuss the organisation of the administrative and social system. The conference was attended by 20 delegates, including those from the North and discussed questions concerning

the nationalities policy and the needs of the indigenous population. The delegates reported on the situation in their localities.

It was decided that food and furs should be sold or purchased at fixed state prices, that 70 per cent of the price of furs should be paid in cash, and the rest in foodstuffs so that hunters would be able to purchase ammunition and manufactured goods with money. The conference also drew up a plan for raising the economic and cultural level of the native population.

The conference was of great political and practical significance. Before the revolution, the native population regarded the Russian Government as an enemy and oppressor, but now the new government became their friend and benefactor. For the first time in centuries, the most backward and oppressed peoples expressed frankly their will and told about their needs.

During 1921 Turukhansk territory received 243,000 poods of flour, 15,000 poods of salt, 3,000 poods of tobacco, 200 poods of sugar, 2,000 poods of kerosene, 154,600 arshins (1 arshin=28 inches) of fabrics, 100 rifles, 30 target pistols, 200 poods of gunpowder, and 750 poods of shot. This relieved the shortage of essential goods in the region.

But the economic situation of the native population in the territory was still extremely difficult.

By the beginning of 1921 the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee, acting on the instructions of the Siberian Food Committee, increased the supply norms. Natives who owned no reindeer were sold 60 pounds of flour a month, natives who owned reindeer—30 pounds; Russians and the coastline population were sold a pood of flour per man, and fishermen received 45 pounds. Food and manufactured goods were sold to the natives on credit. In 1921 sales on credit amounted to 477,000 rubles. Subsequently, the sum was written off the accounts.

Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee decided to distribute incoming commodities equally among the various districts and to establish maximum prices for hunting and fishing products with the aim of organising and restoring local industries, particularly in the districts which had suffered most during 1918-20.



The Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee introduced much that was novel and interesting in the life of the native population. Its measures merit scrupulous examination and generalisation.

The first attempt at organisation was undertaken among the Dolgans, Naganasans, Tungus and Yakuts who inhabited the Avam-Khatanga tundra.

Early in 1922 a conference of non-Russians inhabiting the Avam-Khatanga tundra, who were at the time ruled by the old clan administration headed by a certain prince Barkhatov, was held at the nomadic camp called Nyatino. The conference elected Barkhatov as its delegate to the Yenisei Gubernia congress of Soviets. At that time the non-Russians did not know the norms of the new, Soviet way of life.

On February 14, 1922 the Territorial Executive Committee sent the following letter: "The non-Russians in the Zatundra area, who have sent their delegate to Russia, wait with impatience for the results of his trip, and if Soviet power, which is as yet deaf to the needs and aspirations of the natives, will comply with their requests, then no power will enjoy such popularity among the people as will Soviet power among the non-Russians of the Zatundra area."<sup>1</sup>

On March 3, 1922 the Third Congress of Soviets of Yenisei Gubernia was opened in Krasnoyarsk. Barkhatov was elected to the Presidium. He made a speech at the Congress: "Propaganda against Soviet power and Communists was always conducted among us, the non-Russians, but even there, in the Arctic Circle, we received effective aid from Communists; they explained to us our rights. The non-Russian population elected me so that I would come here and find out whether Communists are our enemies or brothers.

"Now that I have arrived here and familiarised myself with the work of Party, administrative and economic organisations, I affirm that the Communist Party is the genuine champion of the rights of the working people. We regard Communists as our brothers. I have sent a telegram to the North to my brothers, telling them about the actual situation.

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 49, reg. 1, f. 198, l. 39.

Personally, I am a non-Russian, a prince, and I have been elected for a term of three years. I'll be returned for another term, provided that I work well. I'm ready to devote all my efforts to improving the life of the non-Russian population."<sup>1</sup>

The Congress elected Barkhatov candidate-member of the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee. Light is shed on this fact by Lenin. During the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) he spoke of the peoples of Central Asia and of the vestiges of pre-capitalist relations there. He asked: "Can we approach these peoples and tell them that we shall overthrow their exploiters? We cannot do this, because they are entirely subordinated to their mullahs." Lenin provided the following solution: "In such cases we have to wait until the given nation develops, until the differentiation of the proletariat from the bourgeois elements, which is inevitable, has taken place."<sup>2</sup>

It is therefore very important to know the degree of maturity of class relations and the class-consciousness of the peoples bound by pre-capitalist relations. This knowledge was of particular importance in the case of the peoples of the North where class differentiation was embryonic, social relations were dominated by powerful remnants of the patriarchal-clan system, and the class consciousness of the people was extremely weak because they were wholly under the political and economic influence of the local rich—big reindeer-breeders, merchants-procurers, and clan princelings and shamans.

The Party and Soviet organs pursued a highly consistent class and nationalities policy calculated to raise the class consciousness of the people, and attract them to active work in the Soviets, cooperatives and other public organisations, thereby ousting local exploiters.

The Turukhansk district Party organisation was increasing numerically and growing stronger ideologically, spreading its influence on all aspects of life in the territory. By September 1921 the organisation had a membership of 35 Communists.

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 49, reg. 1, f. 245, l. 5.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 172.



In spite of the small number of Communists, work among the population was conducted systematically and in a planned manner.

In December 1922 Krasnoyarsk became the site of the Sixth Congress of Gubernia Soviets. The principal item on the agenda was consolidation of Soviet organs, the protection of indigenous peoples and Russian hunters from exploitation by merchants, and also the improvements in the lives of non-Russians, at that time in a state of semi-starvation. The Congress noted that "it is necessary to quicken the administrative-territorial division to give even the smallest nationalities the right for self-determination".<sup>1</sup>

The Gubernia Congress of Soviets was followed by the Third Turukhansk Territorial Congress of Soviets held on December 25-28, 1922 in Novo-Turukhansk. The Congress was attended by 36 delegates, some of whom came from the most remote places. The Yurak delegates from Taz tundra proposed "to set up a central administrative organ, suited for their mode of life, but in conformity with the overall Soviet system".<sup>2</sup>

In 1922-23 the economic situation of the natives in Turukhansk territory was still very difficult, all the more so because of poor hunting. Merchants charged exorbitant prices for manufactured goods and food. One pood of rye flour cost as much as two poods of salt sturgeon. The greatest difficulties were suffered by herdless nomads who had stayed in the taiga ever since 1920 and received no food supplies. At the end of 1922 the Territorial Executive Committee had to allocate them 3,000 poods of flour free of charge through the food agencies.

At the end of 1923 the situation slightly improved thanks to better catches and increased bags. In 1923 the hunters shot 667,000 squirrels and 29,400 polar foxes; fishermen brought in 27,500 poods of fish. Large quantities of flour, tea, butter, sugar, and other foodstuffs, tobacco, gunpowder and manufactured goods—to the sum of 2,598,600 rubles in gold, were brought during the summer. Seventy-two trading posts were opened, some of them specifically for natives in the remotest parts of the tundra.

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 49, reg. 1, f. 246, l. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., f. 247, l. 74.

At the end of 1923 the Turukhansk Party's district committee certified that the degradation of the peasant economy and of the non-Russian population had been brought to a halt.

That was the first victory, the first glimpse of a new life.

The first steps to create a national administration for the peoples of the North were taken, as we have said, by the Nationalities Commissariat and its Siberian organs, and subsequently by the Committee for Assisting the Peoples in the Northern Border Areas under the Presidium of the All-Union Central Executive Committee (Committee for the North), inaugurated in 1924. The Committee's chairman was P. G. Smidovich, a prominent Party and government figure.

The Committee for the North was essentially a government agency, all its documents referring to the northern peoples were passed on behalf of the government. P. G. Smidovich was concurrently Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the All-Union Central Executive Committee.

The Committee for the North combined the activities of central and local organs dealing with the northern peoples. At the same time the Committee was an extraordinary organ because it dealt with special tasks not in the competence of other commissariats or departments. P. G. Smidovich wrote: "We were given the very difficult but absorbing task of attracting to Soviet power and socialist culture peoples whose development lagged behind by not merely centuries but by thousands of years." Philanthropy was alien to the Committee's activities. Of course, it would have been easier to restrict all activities to mere assistance. "But," as P. G. Smidovich wrote, "the task was of a different nature, it was deeper, more difficult and exhaustive. The Committee was an organ for assisting the small nationalities in the North to build socialism."<sup>1</sup> Everything that was done was done for and by the indigenous peoples themselves.

The Committee comprised the following organs: a plenum, bureau, secretariat, and standing commissions with sub-commissions and local committees for the North.

<sup>1</sup> P. G. Smidovich, "Sovietizatsia Severa" (The Sovietisation of the North), *Sovietsky Sever*, 1930, No. 1, pp. 5, 12.



The Committee's plenum included representatives of the commissariats and central departments concerned with the development of the North as well as representatives of local committees for the North.

The plenums were usually convened once a year to decide on the most important long-range questions. Invitations to attend the sessions were usually sent to students from the northern peoples who studied in Leningrad first in the Workers' Department of the North and then in the Institute of the Peoples of the North. When national areas and districts were formed in December 1930, their representatives were included in the Committee. In 1933 these areas and districts were represented by Evenk A. S. Voronin and Nenets P. S. Bolin.

There were five standing commissions administrative-juridical, financial-planning, scientific-research and cultural-educational, communications, and cooperative-industries.

Local committees for the North in Siberia, the Far East and in many districts of the North worked in close contact with the local authorities.

The Committee started from scratch. It had to invent ways and methods of work among the exceptionally backward and oppressed natives of the North. The first enthusiasts of this work were inspired to unparalleled feats and accomplishments for the national resurrection of the peoples of the North by the great revolutionary ideas and goals of the Communist Party and by its nationalities policy.

The primary role in this respect belonged to Pyotr Smidovich, a professional revolutionary and a prominent Party and government leader. This is how Mikhail Kalinin assessed his work with the Committee for the North: "It is sufficient to remind you of the devotion, love and great concern with which Pyotr Smidovich worked in the Committee for the North, and of the great role which he played in the North. Pyotr Germogenovich's name will be justly and deeply revered and cherished by the peoples, inhabiting our distant north, for many years to come."<sup>1</sup>

Success was guaranteed by the fact that the Committee for the North recruited for its work many high Party and

<sup>1</sup> CPA IML, fd. 78, reg. 1, f. 8 (1936), 1. 22.

Soviet officials, and also scientists who were well acquainted with the history, ethnography, life and industries of the natives of the North.

The Committee for the North took concrete steps to assist the natives. In June 1924 the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee allocated at its request 32,000 rubles to build cultural centres and increase the number of mobile Red Cross teams. An additional 18,900 rubles were allocated to finance reconnaissance parties which were to select the sites for the cultural centres.

A new administrative-territorial division of Siberia was undertaken in May 1925 and the Siberian territory with its centre in Novonikolayevsk (the present Novosibirsk) was formed. The territory comprised Omsk, Novonikolayevsk, Altai, Tomsk and Yenisei gubernias which were in turn divided into districts. The Krasnoyarsk Area was included in Turukhansk territory.

Much statistical and ethnographic data on the native peoples of Turukhansk territory was collected.

Education and medical services were considerably improved. In 1924 there were 12 schools in Turukhansk territory, three of which—with 10 pupils and one teacher each—were for non-Russians in Yanov-Stan, Chirinda and Khatanga. Six medical stations and a hospital were opened in Turukhansk. Khatanga, Ilym and Taz tundras each had one medical assistant. The network of medical institutions was, as we see, insufficient.

In 1925 the Committee for the North and the Society for Studying the Urals, Siberia and the Far East began to publish the *Severnaya Aziya* (Northern Asia) magazine. The editorial staff included F. N. Petrov, S. A. Buturlin N. I. Leonov and V. A. Obruchev. In 1929 the Committee released the first symposium entitled *Sovietsky Sever*, and in 1930 it began to publish the *Sovietsky Sever* (Soviet North) magazine.

It was how the committees for the North were paving the way for the construction of socialism in the Soviet North. Concurrently, the organs of Soviet power were strengthened and expanded in remote taiga and tundra areas; natives were encouraged to take part in their work.

The political organisation of the peoples of the North and



the selection of the forms of their national statehood was a difficult and complicated process.

The first Soviets in the Yenisei North were organised along the clan principle. This form of power was readily comprehensible and corresponded the social, economic and cultural level of the natives.

On November 20-23, 1922, the administrative and territorial commission of the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee discussed the draft of a resolution to make Turukhansk territory an independent administrative unit.

D. Y. Lappo, the Gubernia Executive Committee's lawyer said:

"It is necessary to apply to these peoples the basic provisions of the Constitution of the RSFSR. The peoples of the North should be given an organisation in keeping with the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, concurrently taking into consideration their defencelessness and the level of their economic and cultural development."<sup>1</sup>

The commission recommended the division of the Turukhansk territory into four inspectorial districts: Taz district; Zatundra district; Ilimpia district; and Southern district.

In the beginning of 1923 the Presidium of the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee adopted a resolution to make Turukhansk territory an independent administrative unit, and it approved "The Status of the Administration of the Turukhansk Native Tribes" and "The Status of the Northern Inspectors in Turukhansk Territory". The resolution said: "In conformity with local conditions, to introduce in Turukhansk territory clan Soviets as organs of administration for nomadic native tribes."<sup>2</sup>

The two statutes, drawn up in full conformity with the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia and the Constitution of the RSFSR became basic documents which concretely determined the form of statehood for the peoples of the Yenisei North.

The inspectors had to work in extremely difficult conditions. This can be seen from the example of Yelizar Savelyev. He left Turukhansk for his district on October 13, 1923, on

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 49, reg. 1, f. 276, l. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., f. 511, l. 58.

November 8 he arrived at Bolshoi Porog, and from there he proceeded on reindeer deep into the tundra across Lake Onyoka.

On December 30 a meeting of natives of the Turizh clan was held near Murukta; it was attended by 17 persons. None of them knew Russian, only N.P. Oyegir spoke haltingly, and acted as interpreter. The question on the agenda was the organisation of the clan Soviet. Since there were few inhabitants in the Murukta area, the meeting decided to merge with the Ilimpia clan and inaugurate a common Soviet. On Savelyev's proposal, four delegates were chosen for the general clan meeting. They were the old clan prince Grigory Oyegir (Kolerago), F. N. Oyegir, S. N. Turizhsky and G. V. Turizhsky.

On January 24, 1924 a meeting of the Ilimpia clan was held in the Surinda camp (now Chirinda). It was attended by 64 people. Prince D. V. Udigir acted as chairman, and M. K. Khukochar was secretary. The meeting discussed public affairs and decided to organise aid for poor Tungus. "It must be recognised as necessary," the resolution said, "to organise a herd of 500 reindeer, including 250 does, which must be placed in charge of the clan Soviet."

The reindeer were collected by donations of one per ten from families which owned more than 40 head.

To avert famine, it was decided to order rich Tungus to deliver flour and other products from state warehouses to the camps. The meeting asked the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee to send a veterinary to the tundra to look after the reindeer herds. The oriented Soviet was elected, and its headquarters was fixed at the Surinda camp.

On March 5 Savelyev held a meeting of the Tungus of the Chapogir clan (Miroshkol) attended by 29 people. Tura, near the mouth of the Kochechum where it falls into the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, was declared the administrative centre.

It was decided to help the poor Tungus by organising a public herd and asking the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee to send food during the navigable months of 1924 down the Nizhnyaya Tunguska.

Alexei Chapogir was elected chairman of the clan Soviet. On the way from Tura to Monastirskoye, Savelyev held elections to the clan Soviet at the Severnaya trade post.



On May 6, 1924 a meeting of Tungus of the Choom clan (Bolshoi Porog) was held. Since only 7 people came to the meeting, it was decided not to set up a clan Soviet. Instead Matvei Lapushkin was elected representative of the clan Soviet.

Thus clan Soviets were organised in the Ilimpia tundra in the course of 1924.

The outstanding Communist, Y. S. Savelyev, accomplished a difficult and responsible mission. He was one of the first Soviet officials to cross the length and breadth of the vast Ilimpia tundra.

Savelyev voluntarily chose the life of a wanderer, a life of great difficulties and hazards. He faced many a deadly peril, once he was nearly drowned while crossing a partially frozen river; blizzards kept him for many days in the snow, hungry and cold.

These were the conditions under which the two worlds met—one with the old and primitive traditions and superstitions, and the other, the new world with new laws and order.

An outwardly inconspicuous but actually stubborn struggle in all spheres of life began between these two worlds. At first glance, it was a peaceful struggle, but in reality it was a severe and lengthy clash. Victory was achieved by the new world for it concurred with the verity of Lenin's ideas.

The colonialist policy of tsarism and brazen robbery and cheating by greedy merchants had filled the local population with mistrust and, sometimes, even enmity towards *lyuche*—that is, Russians. The oppressed and exploited native, being illiterate as he was, was not easily convinced that this time he faced a new Russian, the Russian Communist who had come to him as a friend and adviser to help him build a new life.

It all required careful, prudent and wise work. The slightest mistake or error could entail serious setbacks. Most vexing was the fact that the slightest mistake could renew hostility or reticence. The goal was to win the trust and respect of people who until recently have regarded the Russians as their oppressors. To do so, the Russian Communist—the representative of the new world—had to respect the customs and traditions of the natives. For every Russian Communist, there were hundreds and even thousands of natives. Though

there were no telephones or radio in the taiga in those days, the news nevertheless spread very quickly.

Yelizar Savelyev, accomplished his task with honour. For him the trip to the Ilimpia tundra was an unusual affair; it was a journey to the remote past and unexplored lands.

Savelyev left Monastirskoye on October 13, 1923, and returned only on March 29, 1924. He had spent 168 days in the tundra and covered over 3,500 kilometres. The journey had been difficult and dangerous.

Savelyev collected interesting economic and ethnographic information. He may justly be called the first ethnographer of the Tungus people in the Ilimpia tundra. He found there 5 clans of Tungus and one Yakut-Tungus clan in Essci—214 families in all; 60 families had moved to other parts. He made an account of the life of the Tungus in the Ilimpia tundra. Here is an excerpt from his description of certain of the clans:

"The Turizh clan—21 families, 104 people—move about Lake Murukta; fish is the only food, they have never seen bread. Very backward.

"The Chapogir clan (Miroshkol)—36 families, 233 people—roam in the mouth of the Kochechumo and along the Vivi and the Tembenchi. They are the most developed and maintain a sense of dignity and equality.

"The Chapogir clan (Lyutokil)—5 families, 25 people. They separated from the Miroshkol Chapogir clan 10 years ago. The Chapogir had two ancestors—Lyutok and Miroshkol, subsequently the clan grew large, broke up into two clans, and even came to loggerheads. The Lyutoks chose Y. D. Kandin as their prince.

"The Pankagir clan—17 families, 108 people—wander about the same localities as the Chapogir clan—around the mouth of the Vivi, which flows into the Nizhnyaya Tunguska.

"The Choom clan—9 families, 50 people—roam along the Severnaya river and live at the Bolshoi Porog on the Nizhnyaya Tunguska. Their mode of life resembles that of Pankagir."<sup>1</sup>

It seems that the difficulties encountered by Savelyev deprived him of the opportunity to fully register all the Tungus. More precise data demonstrate that there were many

<sup>1</sup> YSA, fd. 183, reg. 2, f. 33. l. 70.



more clans in existence at that time. Savelyev noted the extremely difficult economic situation of the nomads and their unbelievable cultural backwardness. He wrote with bitterness: "The Tungus without reindeer stay near the rivers and lakes (Ekonda, Chirinda, Murukta), which abound in fish—their main food. They fish with home-made hooks of bone or wood. . . . Many of the Tungus have never seen a single civilised man. However, it must be said that they have not been affected by the deformities of capitalist culture, their customs are intact. To this date, the natives in the Ilimpia tundra live in a primitive state."<sup>1</sup>

Cooperative trade in the Ilimpia tundra was in its infancy. The first trade post was opened in 1921 on the Severnaya river, a number of other state and cooperative trade posts were opened in 1923. That, of course, was insufficient.

The work carried out by I. D. Potapov, the inspector for the Podkamennaya Tunguska district, was of no less importance. He organised the Poligusov and Kuzma Tungus clan Soviets and the Chernostrovsky Ostyak Soviet.<sup>2</sup>

The Ostyak Tim-Karakon and Baishen, the Yurak Taz and the Tungus Chapogir-Pankagir clan Soviets were organised in the Taz tundra, where the inspector was F. Y. Golovachev.

The First Congress of Soviets of the Taz tundra was held in the Yanov-Stan trade post in April 1924; it was attended by 18 delegates from the clans. The Congress noted with satisfaction the correctness of the policy pursued by the Soviet government and assured that the population in the Taz tundra would devote all its efforts to encouraging initiative and creative energy in the organisation of a new life in conformity with the laws of the Soviet Republic.

The Congress elected a district executive committee from the native people; its chairman was A. M. Kitkin, the delegate from the Ostyak Tim-Karakon clan Soviet. The Yanov-Stan trade post became the centre of the native district executive committee for the Taz tundra.

The Taz native district executive committee united clan Soviets of several nationalities—Yuraks (Nentsi), Ostyaks

(Selkups) and Tungus (Evenks). This helped to unite them, to eliminate enmity and mistrust.

The state organisation of the peoples of the North took a different course than that taken by other national areas in the Soviet Union. The distinction was that there were national-territorial clan organs of administration not based on the territorial-economic and national principles. This corresponded to the socio-economic and cultural level of development of the peoples of the North at that time.

The organisation of native organs of power on the clan principle was of great importance at that time. The clan Soviets were transitional forms of people's power which paved the way for the organisation of national-territorial organs. Therein lay their historic significance. But though the Soviets were organised on the clan principle, they conducted the distinctly class and national policy of Soviet power and expressed the interests of the toiling masses. The decisions of the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) stated: "The first steps in the policy of class differentiation in eastern border areas must be the isolation of all native exploiter elements from influencing the masses, the struggle against them to be waged by all organs of Soviet self-government, and the abrogation of all class privileges to be enacted by the self-organisation of native masses into Soviets of the working people."<sup>1</sup>

The clan Soviets were in substance peasant organs; Lenin pointed out that "peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries with pre-capitalist relations."<sup>2</sup>

The clan Soviets were precisely Soviets of the type for the peoples of the North.

The Communist Party accumulated invaluable experience in organising national statehood for peoples living under pre-capitalist relations; it represents the Party's outstanding contribution to the theory and practice of the world communist and national liberation movements.

The organisation and consolidation of Soviets in the

<sup>1</sup> YSA, fd. 183, reg. 2, f. 33, l. 77-78.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., f. 17, l. 15.

<sup>1</sup> *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions*, Vol. 2, 1917-24, Moscow, 1970, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 243.



North is one of the remarkable pages in the construction of the Soviet multinational state.

The toiling masses of the Yenisei North welcomed enthusiastically the organisation of clan Soviets. A meeting of clans at Agata trading post declared: "We, the Tungus of the district of Agata, recognise Soviet power as our working people's power, we need it." The Tungus from Bachinskaya trade post (the present Osharovo) wrote: "Soviet power does not allow the poor to be cheated, it looks after all peoples." The natives thanked the Russian workers and the Communist Party for the new life. "The Tungus meeting of the Turizh clan regards tsarist policy as unjust. We heartily greet the Russian workers and peasants who have overthrown the tsar and the bourgeoisie. The meeting expresses its belief that Communists and Bolsheviks are the real defenders of the working people."<sup>1</sup>

Such statements illustrate the political atmosphere of those years and show that the breath of the Great October Revolution reached the very outskirts of the Soviet Republic.

The clan Soviets took up the defence of the interests of the working people from the beginning. They concentrated upon the eradication of old and harmful customs and traditions in the life and psychology of the native population. They immediately made plain that their new power and order were strong. The Ilimpia clan Soviet in Chirinda distributed 500 reindeer among the poor Tungus in January 1924. There reindeer had been expropriated from rich breeders.

In 1924 the Lower Imbat Ostyak clan Soviet prohibited *kalims* for brides. This happened after K. Katorgin filed a claim against Zakhar Dibikov in the Soviet for failing to pay 7 reindeer as *kalim* (Katorgin gave his daughter as wife to Dibikov's son). The claim was refused and the clan Soviet prohibited thenceforth the practice of demanding *kalims* for young women.

Stubborn and systematic work to draw the native population to the side of Soviet power brought results.

There were, of course, many difficulties, errors and mistakes in the work of the first clan Soviets. The overriding

<sup>1</sup> SAKT, fd. 529, reg. 1, f. 56, l. 10; YSA, fd. 183, reg. 2, f. 32, l. 18.

difficulty was that the native population failed to immediately comprehend the social changes underway. The Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee pointed out that "the organisation of the organs of Soviet power spreads deeply into the tundra but slowly into the everyday life of the native. It is hard, of course, for the native to comprehend the essence of Soviet power because he has been indoctrinated by shamans to believe in spirits, and because he is ignorant and overwhelmed by inexplicable natural phenomena. The new, however, is penetrating more profoundly into the life of the native."<sup>1</sup>

It is fitting to refer here to Lenin's observation that: "For the first time, not the minority, not the rich alone, not the educated alone, but the real people, the vast majority of the working people, are *themselves* building a new life, are by *their own experience* solving the most difficult problems by socialist organisation."<sup>2</sup>

The experience gained in the organisation of Soviet power in the Yenisei North was of great significance for determining the forms and character of the organs of national administration for the northern peoples in the Soviet Union.

This preparatory work resulted in the adoption of "Provisional Regulations for Administering the Native Peoples and Tribes in the Northern Border Areas of the RSFSR" by the All-Union Central Executive Committee in 1926. For nearly five years (up to 1930) these Provisional Regulations served as the Soviet state's basic legislative document governing the national-state organisation of the peoples of the North.

According to the Provisional Regulations, the organs of native local administration of the peoples and tribes of the North were: 1) clan conferences; 2) clan Soviets; 3) district native congresses; and 4) district native executive committees (Tuzriks).

The clan conference was attended by all members of the given clan and other citizens who roamed or lived in the given territory, who had attained the age of 18 and were enfranchised. It was convened once a year by the clan So-

<sup>1</sup> YSA, fd. 250, reg. 1, f. 59, l. 9.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 72.



viet, at a time adjusted to the work and life of the population. The Tungus, for instance, usually held their clan conferences (*suglans*) in July or August—the most convenient period for the people.

The conference discussed and resolved all questions affecting the clan and elected for a term of one year a Soviet of three members acting as its executive organ.

Several clans or other associations "of blood relations or a single tribe" elected at their conferences delegates to the district congresses, at one delegate per 50 people. The native district congresses were also convened once a year.

The congress elected the district native executive committee consisting of a chairman, his deputy, one member and two candidate members. When necessary, the executive committees moved about with the population.

Usually, the native district executive committees were subordinated to the territorial executive committees.

By the beginning of 1927 there were 34 clan or tribal Soviets in the Yenisei North, of which 18 were Tungus, 6—Samoyed, 2—Dolgan, 6—Ostyak-Samoyed, and 2—Yakut.

A new phase in the establishment of the organs of Soviet power set in after the formation of the Taz and the Ilimpia district executive committees. This phase was characterised by an extension of the term of office of clan Soviets, their amalgamation, and the organisation of native district executive committees.

By that time, the political activity of the peoples of the North had increased considerably. They were already voicing demands for the establishment of native districts.

In the middle of 1927 the local organs of Soviet power enacted the will of the peoples of the North by organising the Khatanga and Baikit native districts. The Taz, Dudinka, Khatanga, Baikit and Ilimpia districts, which had been set up by 1928, united 36 clan Soviets.

Of most importance was the fact that this action laid the groundwork for a gradual transition from the organs of Soviet power structured along clan lines to the principle of national-territorial and economic organisation. This paved the way for national statehood for the peoples of the North. The formation of the districts coinciding with ethnic boundaries brought the organs of Soviet power closer to the in-

digenous peoples, particularly so because in conformity with the decision of the Presidium of the All-Union Central Executive Committee of June 1, 1927, judicial functions were imparted, as a provisional measure, to native organs of administration in the person of clan Soviets and district executive committees.

The nature of their work can be viewed through the example of the Baikit indigenous district executive committee elected by the clan Soviets in the Podkamennaya Tunguska basin.

When the district was formed in July 1927 there were 5 clan Soviets unifying 329 Tungus households, mostly nomadic, with a population of 1,851. The local rich owned 38.1 per cent of the total of 15,800 head of reindeer. The average number of reindeer owned per household in the different social groups was as follows: 53.6 by the poor, 70.7 by the middle, and 194 by the rich households. The poorest segments of the population were dependent upon the rich.

This distribution of reindeer was a sign of increasing class differentiation and of the fact that the rich reindeer-breeders were becoming exploiters of the poor and of the hired workers. Everything—means of transportation, food and dwellings—depended on the rich. They owned large herds and seized the best pasturelands, hunting and fishing grounds. The poor eked out a minimal existence and were in the servitude of the local rich.

In February 1928, the East-Siberian department of the Russian Red Cross Society opened a hospital in Baikit, thanks largely to the selfless efforts of V. I. Tarutina, an experienced and energetic doctor. She regularly visited the *chooms* of the Tungus and provided medical aid to them on the move. Between 1929 and 1930 she examined 1,793 people.

In August 1930 the health commission of the Siberian Committee for the North heard Tarutina's report and drew up a number of measures for improving medical services for the Tungus in the Baikit district. An additional 13,700 rubles were allocated for the hospital in Baikit.

In November 1929, the district executive committee opened the first school. It was attended by 5 pupils. The first teacher was A. F. Anisimov, a member of the Komsomol and a student at the Leningrad University.



By 1929, there were 8 clan Soviets in the district. In that year, 48 deputies, of which 35 represented the poor and 13 the middle groups of the population, were elected to the clan Soviets and the district executive committees.

Following the decision of the district executive committees, 3,500 poods of flour were brought to Baikit as relief for the poor. Special credits were allocated for purchasing 100 reindeer for free distribution among the poor Tungus who had no reindeer at all.

In 1929 and 1930 the district received 711,800 rubles' worth of various commodities and foodstuffs. That winter, the district produced 384,300 rubles' worth of furs.

The First Congress of Soviets of the Baikit district attended by 17 delegates was held in June 1929.

"Soviet power," said the delegates, "provided the opportunity for improving the position of the Tungus, it is taking steps to make the Tungus literate and useful citizens." P. S. Burmakin, one of the delegates, said: "I come from the coarse and ignorant Tungus, but I have become a literate man, and for this I am deeply grateful to Soviet power."

The Congress adopted the following resolution after hearing the report on the international situation: "Against all attempts of the world bourgeoisie to strangle our Soviet power, we, the Tungus of the Baikit district, pledge to assist the Soviet power in every possible way." The Congress summed up the results of the work of clan Soviets and the native district executive committee. One of its decisions forbade the rich to employ workhands. The delegates pointed out that the rich were acting as subversive elements when they asserted that "the poor cannot govern the people and therefore it is necessary to elect the rich to the Soviets". The rich did not restrict themselves to verbal attacks against Soviet power; frequently they resorted to direct acts against Soviet organisations.

Only the Tungus were elected to the new Tuzrik consisting of 5 members and 2 candidate members. P. S. Burmakin was elected chairman. The main difficulty in the work of the Tuzrik was that there were few literate people. In the new Tuzrik, only 2 members were literate; of the 43 members of clan Soviets, only 14 could read.

The organisation of the indigenous national districts was of great importance because the work of Tuzriks and the clan Soviets stimulated the growth of the national and class consciousness of the aborigines.

Elections to the Tuzriks and clan Soviets showed that political activity among the native population had increased. In the elections of 1926 only 36 per cent of the electorate took part, compared with 51 per cent in 1927. The number of women took part in the elections increased from 13 to 37 per cent.

The number of native inhabitants taking part in the work of the Soviet was increasing from year to year. The congress of the Soviets of the Turukhansk district in 1927 was attended by only 3 natives. In 1929 the number rose to 19. I. Y. Mandakov, a Ket, N. I. Silkin, a Dolgan, N. I. Nader, a Nenets, N. Y. Lengamo, an Evenk, and I. I. Chekurov, a Selkup, were elected to the district executive committee.

Class differentiation within the native population was increasing, the political consciousness of the poor and hired workers was on the rise.

The clan upper stratum exploited their kinsmen under the guise of patriarchal-clan relations. Some of them used economic levers to be elected to the clan Soviets. In 1928, for example, the inhabitants of Yanov Stan complained that "we still have the prince, he was with us before and he is still with us". In 1929, the Siberian Committee for the North pointed out that "the role of indigenous wealthy elements, particularly in the tundra, is still rather significant, the poor and the hired workers still remain in their economic bondage". At the same time, the committee noted that "during the years of Soviet power, the natives of the Siberian North, while generally retaining their former customs and traditions, have achieved considerable changes in the field of economic, cultural and social development thanks to special measures taken by the Soviet power. The political position of the natives of the North is characterised by the growing trust in Soviet power and its policies. The indigenous poor are freeing themselves of traditional servitude to the former princes and chiefs."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CSAOR, fd. 1235, reg. 124, f. 112, l. 16.



By 1929, in the Far North there were 61 Tuzriks, unifying 381 native clan Soviets.

The natives began to work actively and more regularly in their district executive committees and the clan Soviets. In 1929 P.G. Smidovich wrote: "The taiga and the tundra are in motion. All the peoples of the North have been drawn into some sort of movement; sometimes quietly and in a businesslike manner, sometimes with perhaps excessive perturbation, sometimes feebly and irresolutely, the natives have introduced with an inexperienced hand new principles into their life."<sup>1</sup>

Summing up the results of the national-state organisation, the Siberian Committee for the North noted in its report for 1930 that "the natives of the North assimilate the basic principles put forth by the Soviets, understand their meaning and exhibit complete trust in the organs of Soviet power".

The ideal of building socialism received wide circulation among the native peoples of the North. This was a practical implementation of Lenin's instructions: "One of the most important tasks now confronting us is to consider how the foundation-stone of the organisation of the Soviet movement can be laid in the *non-capitalist* countries."<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Introduction of Socialist Changes

The Communist Party's and Soviet state's socio-economic measures for the transformation of the patriarchal economy and development of the productive forces of the North gradually prepared the economic preliminaries to the northern people's transition to socialism.

A decisive link in the Communist Party's economic policy in the North was the exploration of its natural wealth and resources, followed by the foundation of socialist indus-

<sup>1</sup> P. G. Smidovich, "Na chetvertom godu" (Four Years Later), *Sovietky Sever*, Moscow, 1929, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 232.

try and the creation of a transportation network in the vast territory, stretching from the Kola Peninsula to the Bering Strait.

The economic development of the national border areas in the Soviet Union was closely linked with the elimination of existing inequality of peoples, and with the eradication of long-existing economic and cultural backwardness.

In order to liquidate this inequality, the Party's 10th Congress (1921) resolved that the first requisite was the planned development of industry in the border areas; specifying this task, the Party's 12th Congress (1923) set down in its resolution that aid to the backward peoples "must be primarily expressed in the adoption of a number of practical measures for the creation of industrial centres with the maximum mobilisation of the local population in the republics of the formerly oppressed peoples".<sup>1</sup>

The creation of industrial centres in the Yenisei North was impeded by a lack of essential geological data.

In January 1919, during the most difficult period of the Civil War, when foreign interventionists still infested the country's vast territories, the scientific and technical department of the All-Russia Council for National Economy set up a commission for investigating the North. The Soviet Government stimulated the interest of progressive scientists in the Far North. In 1920, the Russian Academy of Sciences arranged a broad conference on the North which drew up a comprehensive plan for investigating it.

In the same year, it was decided to organise the Northern scientific expedition (Sevekspeditsia) for the "scientific and technical exploration of the natural productive forces of the Russian North to ensure their most effective utilisation, and also for the direction and coordination of scientific and practical work to be conducted by all organs and institutions in the localities".

Thus, from the very beginning the systematic exploration of the North was conducted on a national scale. The expedition operated under the scientific council chaired by A. P. Karpinsky, President of the Academy of Sciences. Academician Fersman, Maxim Gorky and many other promi-

<sup>1</sup> *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions...*, Vol. 2, pp. 253, 438.



ent scientists and public figures took part in the work of the expedition.

In 1923, the All-Russia Council for the National Economy launched the first Soviet Polar expedition to Novaya Zemlya.

In the early 1920s and later, geological prospecting parties were sent to various areas in the Yenisei North—to the Taimyr Peninsula, the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, the Kureika and the Paysina. There they discovered gigantic deposits of coal, graphite, nickel, copper, iron ore, gold, Iceland spar, precious stones and other minerals.

From 1917 through 1924, S.V. Obruchev, a prominent Soviet geologist, explored the Central Siberian Plateau and made an entirely new description of its structure. He predicted the discovery of the mammoth Tungus coal basin. "The deposits in the basin are so great," Obruchev wrote, "that in future it will become one of the country's major power sources."<sup>1</sup>

An important role belonged to the Committee for the Northern Sea Route set up in 1920 under the auspices of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee. It explored the conditions for navigation in the Arctic Ocean, particularly in the mouths of the Ob, Lena, Yenisei and other rivers; the organisation of radio communications; building of ports in the mouths of Siberian rivers; prospecting for minerals, and the general economic development of the North of Siberia.

In 1921, prospecting parties searched for coal and graphite in the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska.

The exploration of the Norilsk coal deposits, undertaken by N.N. Urvantsev's expedition in 1919, were continued. Special expeditions investigated the Norilsk-Dudinka route for the feasibility of building a railway, and drew the conclusion that such a railway could be operated only in summer.

A geological expedition under S. V. Obruchev investigated the Yenisei's tributaries—the Podkamennaya Tunguska,

<sup>1</sup> S. V. Obruchev, *U neizvedanniye kraya. Puteshestviye na Sever. 1917-1930* (In the Unexplored Lands. A Journey to the North. 1917-1930), Moscow, 1954, p. 203.

Bakhta, Sukhaya Tunguska, Kureika and Khantaika—to determine the western boundaries of the Tungus coal basin.

A rescue expedition headed by the prominent polar explorer N.A. Begichev, criss-crossed on reindeer the western part of the Taimyr Peninsula in search of Roald Amundsen's party.

Ethnographic studies of the peoples inhabiting the Soviet North were undertaken.

Much was done in those years to convey commodities via the Northern Sea Route. From August through September 1921, 110,000 poods of Turukhansk graphite and 535,000 poods of grain were shipped west via the Yenisei, and 10,000 tons of commodities to the sum of 107 million rubles in gold were brought in for direct exchange with the Siberian natives.

Accordingly, the Committee for the Northern Sea Route set in motion activities leading to the development of transport facilities in the Soviet North and to the exploration of its vast natural resources.

The Kara Sea expeditions of 1920-22 played an important role. Radio stations were set up in Obdorsk (the present Salekhard), Ust-Dubinsk, Matochkin Shar, Novaya Zemlya and in the mouth of the Yenisei to facilitate the expeditions.

In 1920 the Kara Sea expeditions conveyed down the Yenisei and the Ob 93,300 poods of various goods, including 20,300 poods of fur for export from Siberia. About 4 million rubles' worth of farm implements, fabrics, instruments, medicines, chemicals, equipment and other commodities were imported from abroad.

The Committee for the Northern Sea Route was the predecessor of the Chief Administration of the Northern Sea Route (Glavsevmorput), the present government agency for developing the North.

Immediately after the restoration of Soviet power in Siberia, the Soviet government organised material assistance to the peoples of the North. In 1920, the supply agencies of Siberia stepped up the delivery of essential commodities to the natives of the North, and in May 1921, the Yenisei Gubernia Executive Committee examined the question of supplying flour to the population in Turukhansk territo-



ry. When navigation was renewed, 200,000 poods of flour were rushed to the North, saving the native population from hunger.

The state trade posts established parity trade relations with the natives dealing a heavy blow to private trade.

Credits for the purchase of reindeer and of hunting and fishing gear were an important means of economic aid to the poorest strata of the native population. In 1925 credits reached the sum of 300,000 rubles, and in 1926 totalled 810,000 rubles. In 1927 the Krasnoyarsk Committee for the North received 829,000 rubles in long-term credits for the rehabilitation and development of the native economy.

A big role in supporting the welfare and developing the economy of the native population in the North was played by flour depots.

In the Yenisei North, three flour depots—at Lake Chirinda, in the Uryadnik camp and in the village of Dudinka, were opened. They supplied flour and salt; in inaccessible areas, the population was also supplied with many essential goods—tea, tobacco, munitions, fishing tackle. In the event of natural calamities, a poor hunting or fishing season, the flour depots sold on credit; credit was also arranged for economically weak native households.

Cooperative trade was also an important aspect of the economic aid offered to the native population. It began to develop in the Yenisei North in 1921 when a general meeting of Tungus was called in the Oskoba trading post. The meeting decided to organise a cooperative to supply the Tungus in the Podkamennaya Tunguska area with the essential goods to free them from local merchants. On November 16, 1921 the *Krasnoyarsky Rabochi* reported that it was the first native cooperative in the Turukhansk North.

In 1925 there were already seven consumer societies catering for 5,400 natives in the Yenisei North. In the period from 1921 to 1925 70 trade posts with cooperative shops were opened in the Yenisei North.

Gradually, state and cooperative trade ousted private trade. The cooperatives, which were occupied only with supply and marketing, were to grow into production cooperatives and play the decisive role in the transformation of the native economy in the North along socialist lines.

Simultaneously with the direct material assistance to the native population of the North and with the development of cooperative trade, the Soviet government took steps to rehabilitate and develop the basic branches of native economy—reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing. Decisive in this respect were Lenin's instructions and the decisions worked out and adopted under Lenin's guidance.

In the first place, it was necessary to rehabilitate and promote reindeer-breeding. Anthrax wrought havoc in the Turukhansk North in 1921-23. It was hard to combat it, because there was no veterinary aid. Thousands of animals perished. The Tungus Chapogir, Kurkogir and the Pankagir clans in the Nizhnyaya Tunguska lost half of their reindeer—the number of head dropped from 10,800 to 5,400. The state rehabilitated reindeer-breeding by extending credits, opening state nurseries, and organising veterinary services. In 1927 the native population in the Yenisei North was granted 142,700 rubles in credits for the purchase of 2,855 reindeer.

In 1929-30, long-term credits for the restoration of reindeer-breeding in the whole of the Far North amounted to 471,000 rubles, and in 1930-33, to 2,826,200 rubles.

The Soviet state's assistance to the poorest strata of the native population considerably increased the number of reindeer in their households. For example, in the Ilimpia district the average size of herds owned by the poor increased in four years (1926/27-1930/31) by 45.5 per cent, and of herds owned by middle strata of the population by 5.3 per cent.

A network of zootechnical and veterinary institutions was set up to render assistance to the reindeer-breeders. Before the revolution there were none. In 1929 there were 4 veterinary-bactereological stations, 13 stationary veterinary sectors, 28 mobile veterinary teams, 5 zootechnical stations and 1 experimental reindeer-breeding station. They all successfully fought anthrax, mange and other ungulate diseases.

A task of no less importance was the rehabilitation of hunting. According to the Arctic Area Census of 1926/27, the marketable surplus of fur among nomadic households in Turukhansk territory constituted only 79 per cent. In that year, the native population in Turukhansk territory produced 2,539,000 rubles' worth of commodities, including 613,000 from hunting, 526,000 from fishing, and 400,000



from reindeer-breeding. Thus, the yield of hunting accounted for more than 60 per cent of the gross product of native households.

According to the same census, there were 2,445 households in Turukhansk territory, 90 per cent of which were occupied in reindeer-breeding, 95 per cent in the fur industry, and 89 per cent in fishing.

The decree "On Hunting", adopted on July 20, 1920 and signed by Lenin, was a very important step by the Soviet government. It marked the organisational beginning of the hunting industry over the entire territory of the republic.

In 1922, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR passed a decision "On Rules for Hunting, Its Seasons and Methods" which defined more clearly the basic principles of hunting on the territory of the Soviet Republic. The decision said that "fur-bearing and other valuable animals are the property of the state and that hunting is a state-economic planned activity".<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the North were granted broader hunting rights. In the republic as a whole, only adults had the right to hunt, but no age limitations were applied in the national hunting areas. In those areas the local population was not required to apply for hunting licenses or to pay hunters' dues. These provisions were applied to all natives in the North whose main occupation was hunting.

Special reserves were made for the protection and propagation of valuable animals and birds.

The export of furs provided the Soviet Union with considerable funds for industrialisation.

The task, however, consisted not merely in rehabilitating the principal branches of the local economy, but in remodeling it on socialist lines. The decisive role in the switching of the native patriarchal economy to socialist lines belongs to Lenin's cooperative plan.

The Party's 10th Congress determined the tasks of co-operatives in the national border areas and indicated that "the Soviet government must, primarily through the single

<sup>1</sup> *Sobraniye uzakonenii RSFSR, 1922* (A Collection of State Acts of the RSFSR for 1922), No. 54, p. 687.

network of consumer cooperatives, come to the aid of the native semi-proletarian masses whom economic dislocation threatens with extinction".<sup>1</sup>

Lenin's cooperative plan envisioned attracting not only small-commodity, but also patriarchal-natural producers to socialist construction. This pertained specifically to the peoples of the Far North.

Initially, there were only consumer and marketing co-operatives in the Far North, supplying the essential commodities, the hunting and fishing gear. In exchange, the population delivered the bounty from hunting, fishing and reindeer-breeding. The cooperatives had to be raised to a higher stage, so integral (mixed) cooperatives were organised to combine supply, marketing and productive functions.

Integrated cooperatives were organised in 1927 exclusively in northern districts inhabited by native tribes engaged in hunting, fishing and reindeer-breeding. Eight areas, 9 district integrated unions, 134 integrated associations and 389 shops were organised in the Far North in 1927-30. In 1934 there were 869 trading establishments. The integrated cooperatives improved the supply of basic goods to the peoples of the Far North. Their task was to oust private trade completely. Since 1928 integrated cooperatives became the leading trade organisations in the Far North.

The following data illustrate the cooperative movement in the Far North as a whole:<sup>2</sup>

|        |                 |
|--------|-----------------|
| 1928 — | 60,000 members  |
| 1929 — | 90,200 "        |
| 1930 — | 105,800 "       |
| 1931 — | 115,100 "       |
| 1932 — | 125,000 members |

In the six-year period (1928-33) the membership in the cooperatives more than doubled.

The integrated cooperatives organised the following simple associations: a) mixed northern; b) reindeer-breeding; c) fishermen's; and d) hunters' associations. The simple association was the primary form of a collective economy.

<sup>1</sup> *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions...*, Vol. 2, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Y. Koshelev. *Tuzemnaya kooperatsiya severa*. (The Native Co-operatives in the North), Moscow, 1934, p. 18.

Its members retained their means of production. In the associations, which were the simplest and most accessible form of production associations, the natives came to adopt the basic norms and behaviour patterns of collective economy and received many opportunities to improve their material position.

By 1930 there were 45 simple associations in the Yenisei North, 33 of which were fishermen's, 7 reindeer-breeders', and 5 other types of associations. Collectivisation embraced 9.3 per cent of the population. The class composition of the first associations was as follows: farmhands—8 per cent, poor people—52 per cent, and middle—40 per cent.

The first production cooperatives in the North played an important role in preparing the conditions for mass collectivisation. They demonstrated the advantages of collective labour over individual and the clan labour. Further developments convinced the natives of the advantages inherent in cooperatives. The cooperatives not only supplied the rifles, gunpowder, nets, seine nets, etc., but also organised the economic activities of the population and drew them into the common channel of socialist construction. They helped to rally the local population round the Soviet government for the struggle against local exploiters and merchants.

Important in the organisation of the procuring and marketing activities of integrated cooperatives were the contracts for fish and game. These contracts were a new form of relations between the natives and Soviet cooperatives, the embryo of new, socialist relations.

The integrated cooperatives played the decisive role in raising the indigenous economy and preparing the conditions for the creation of new, socialist economic forms. They enabled the natives to actively participate in building socialism and paved the way for mass collectivisation.

The initial land-and-water management scheme, implemented under the direction of the Committee for the North, was an important economic measure aimed at creating new, socialist production relations among the northern peoples.

The scheme embraced an area of approximately 625 million hectares. It was begun in 1931 and completed almost fully in 1934.

The land-management scheme fully complied with the class policy: the pasturelands and the hunting and fishing grounds were allocated first to the simplest types of production associations, northern mixed artels and state farms, and to the poor and middle strata of the native population with due regard for their actual land-tenure situation. The prosperous segments of the population were given land according to norms which were calculated to restrict the use of those lands by other than personal labour.

In 1932 and 1933, the land-management expedition in the Baikit and Tungus-Chunya districts distributed approximately 25.6 million hectares of land, almost half of which were given over to the socialist sector, and 13.5 million to the poor and middle natives. Subsequently, this entire territory was given over to collective farms.

The land-management scheme helped invigorate the industries of the northern natives and reshape them along socialist lines, eliminated actual inequalities in land-tenure and protected the interests of poor and middle natives from exploitation by local rich. The land-and-water management solved not only economic problems, but also an exceptionally important political problem. It helped to determine more precisely the borders of the national areas and districts as administrative-territorial units. In this way it facilitated the creation of the statehood for the peoples of the North.

The economic measures of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government gradually established the prerequisites for the transition of the northern peoples to socialism.

#### 4. The Beginning of Cultural Development

In the sphere of cultural development, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government have also worked out flexible and pertinent methods for work among the peoples of the North. This work began with the creation of cultural-educational institutions (cultural centres) in the most remote and inhabitable places in the Far North. They were designed to take care of both nomads and settled natives.



In 1925, the Committee for the North pointed out at its plenary meeting that "the organisation of cultural centres is the most expedient and rational method of work for promoting culture, developing initiative, elaborating the principles of national self-determination, drawing the native tribes into building the Soviet society, and rendering immediate economic and cultural aid to the local inhabitants. The main feature of these cultural centres is to be the combination of cooperative, economic, educational, medical, veterinary, and scientific-research activities, as planned by the Committee for the North".<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, the cultural bases were transformed into administrative and cultural centres for the ethnic groups.

The first cultural base in the Soviet Union was opened in Tura, in October 1927.

The natives of the North welcomed the organisation of cultural centres, for they regarded them as an expression of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government's concern for their needs. The meeting of the Tungus, which was held at the Chirinda trade post in 1926, stated in its resolution the following: "We all want a town to be built at the mouth of the Tura. The land around the Tura is good. The road from Chirinda to Tura is straight and short, and can be easily traversed on foot. We rejoice that this town will be built, for it will considerably improve our life. We want a hospital, our sick must be taken care of. We need a school. We shall send our children to the school and keep them there as long as required."<sup>2</sup>

The Tura cultural centre, which introduced socialist culture in the North, was officially opened in October 1927. It was a large cultural and educational centre with a boarding school, a veterinary clinic with a bacteriological laboratory, a hospital, an outpatient clinic, a tuberculosis dispensary, a club, and a bathhouse with a laundry.

A boarding school for eight Tungus children was opened on November 7, 1927—on the 10th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. A few days later, a club was

<sup>1</sup> *Sovetsky Sever*, 1934, No. 1, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> SAKT, fd. 529, reg. 1, f. 60, l. 5.

opened. For the first time as many as 20 Tungus took part in celebrating the anniversary of the October Revolution.

The outpatient clinic began to receive patients in the beginning of September, and the hospital opened its doors on September 20—something unprecedented in these parts.

The staff of the cultural centre consisted of proficient people who loved their work and did all they could to help the local inhabitants. The first director was F. Y. Babkin, ex-chairman of the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee. F. Y. Babkin was well acquainted with local conditions, and enjoyed authority among the native population.

Many Russians—doctors, teachers, club employees—were pioneers in the construction of a new life, a new culture for the Tungus people. Here is an excerpt from an article by Dr. Kitmanov, one of the pioneers: "This small and isolated world [of pioneers—*Ed.*] will do much to disseminate culture and knowledge. Given the unanimous participation of the Tungus, we hope to accomplish the tasks assigned to us from the centre; the unfortunate and poverty-stricken Tungus people, formerly doomed to extinction, will add a page to the history of the organisation of Soviet government in Turukhansk territory."<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet state allocated considerable funds for the cultural base.

The staff of the centre were as good as their word. The doctors selflessly fought an epidemic of measles which broke out in the north of Ilimpia district in the autumn of 1926. Dr. Simonov, who knew the Tungusic language, and I. S. Platsek, a veterinary surgeon's assistant, crossed 2,500 kilometres on reindeer and sledge, treating the sick on the way and acquainting the local population with the tasks and goals of the Tura centre.

The veterinary sector of the centre succeeded in stopping the epizootic of scabbies; 99 per cent of the 1,500 reindeer, brought by the natives, were cured.

The medical workers were busy working among the women. On the initiative of Dr. Gladilina they organised, at the

<sup>1</sup> D. A. Kitmanov, "K otkritiyu kultbazi na Turukhanskom Severe" (The Cultural Base in the Turukhansk North), *Severnaya Aziya*, 1928, No. 19, pp. 83-84.

cultural centre, a circle for Tungus women. The lectures were given on medical, hygienic and political subjects. Attention was focussed on the propaganda of new life and culture.

The Tura centre accumulated valuable experience of work among the natives. It became the centre of not only cultural-educational work, but also of the area's economic development. Today Tura is the administrative and cultural centre of the Evenk National Area.

Somewhat later, a cultural centre in Khatanga—the first in Taimyr—was opened for Dolgans, Samoyeds, Tungus and Yakuts. Subsequently, it became the centre of Khatanga district.

The cultural centres played a decisive role in the cultural development of the peoples of the North.

By 1934 there were 13 cultural bases in the Far North.

The Soviet Government also paid great attention to the organisation of public education.

In 1922 there were only 3 primary schools in Turukhansk territory with a total of 5 teachers and only a few native pupils. The People's Commissariat for Nationalities ordered the Siberian Department for Nationalities to take urgent steps to open primary and secondary schools for the natives of the North along the lines of standard schools to correspond with local conditions. Allocations for cultural and educational purposes were considerably increased. In the fiscal year 1922/23 the Turukhansk Territorial Executive Committee allocated 12,800 rubles for education and 13,400 rubles for medical services, of the total budget of 92,800 rubles.

A new type of an educational institution—the boarding school—was opened to correspond with national customs, particularly the nomadic way of life. Pupils who lived 200 or 300 kilometres away were boarded throughout the schoolyear at the expense of the state.

Boarding schools were opened in Khatanga, Yanov-Stan and Dudinka in 1924/25. Each had accommodation for 10 pupils, and the total number reached 27.

The first native general-education schools appeared in 1922; the local cooperative in Yerbogachen, for instance, provided the funds for the first Tungus school.

Subsequently, it was reorganised into a seven-year school

—one of the first in the Far North. It was organised by the gifted teacher, I. G. Kiselev, who was later awarded the Order of Lenin for his work in the field of education. In 1933/34 the school presented its first certificates to 5 Tungus (Evenks)—G. K. Kaplin, S. N. Kombagir, N. N. Kaplin, V.N. Udigir and V.N. Uvachan.

One of the distinctive features of native schools was the acceptance of children up to the age of 17, because it was necessary to train, in the shortest possible time, literate native workers for the various sectors of the socialist construction.

The first native schools faced many difficulties. Many local inhabitants were so backward that they refused to send their children to school; usually, the teachers did not know the language of the pupils, while the latter knew no Russian. Sometimes half a year passed before mutual understanding was achieved. There were no established curricula or textbooks. Everything was left to the teachers' discretion. Those difficulties, however, were overcome.

The plenary meeting of the Committee for the North, held in March 1927, proved to be of great importance for the development of public education among the peoples of the North. The meeting heard a report by the People's Commissar for Education of the RSFSR A. V. Lunacharsky on the state and tasks of education among the peoples of the North. Lunacharsky said, in part: "They fled from capitalist culture deep into the tundra in an effort to protect their own indigenous culture. This is why they had neither intellectuals nor even literate people." Lunacharsky went on to say that "due to their remoteness from industrial and cultural centres, the peoples of the North began to feel Soviet influence later than the other nationalities in the USSR. This state was protracted by interventionist occupation of many northern districts during the first few years after the October Revolution. Even when the civil war ended, Soviet power had no means to immediately implement the necessary measures among the natives of the North. This is why they have no written language and no intelligentsia. But the October Revolution has awakened these peoples."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CPA IML, fd. 142, reg. 1, f. 334, l. 13.



The plenary meeting of the Committee for the North drew up a broad organisational programme for the school network and developed teaching methods and curricula for local application.

By 1930, there were five native schools in the Yenisei North—in Turukhansk, Khantanga, Yanov-Stan, Yerbogachen and Baikit. In addition, there was the boarding school at the Tura centre. All in all, 839 children, including 115 natives, went to these schools in 1929/30.

In the same year, the total number of schools in the Soviet North reached 123, and the number of pupils—3,000; the number of boarding schools for natives was 62.

The first teachers were mostly Russians, members of the Komsomol, sent to the North by their organisations. Many of them decided to stay there permanently, and later became historians, linguists, ethnographers and writers.

In those days, teaching in these schools required great physical and moral effort. Not all teachers could stand the strain. In this connection, Lunacharsky wrote: "We have outstanding people in the North; the role of this small detachment is great. Irresolute workers drop out, because they are not needed there; only outstanding people, i.e., those who like this work, stay there."<sup>1</sup> These people, as Lunacharsky said, had the required cultural and moral qualities above and beyond professional teaching skills.

The peoples of the North will never forget the noble work of the Russian teachers who gave their children an education.

While opening the schools, the Soviet Government simultaneously worked on the development of written languages for the peoples of the North; ABC textbooks were ordered. The first primary reader for the peoples of the North was compiled in 1927 by V.G. Tan-Bogoraz and S.V. Stebnitsky. In the same year N. I. Leonov and P. Y. Ostrovskikh published the *Our North* reader. In 1929, a book by G.M. Vasilevich, *Evenkil dukuwuntin* (Book for Evenks), was printed by hectograph; it was followed, in 1931, by the first printed ABC textbook in the Evenk language.

<sup>1</sup> A. V. Lunacharsky, "Zadachi Narkomprosa na Krainem Severe" (The Tasks of the People's Commissariat for Education in the Far North), *Severnaya Aziya*, 1927, No. 3, pp. 20-21.

Many cultural and educational establishments—"red chooms", cottage reading-rooms, libraries, clubs and cinema houses for natives—disseminated socialist culture in the North.

The first "red choom" was opened in 1929 by the Turukhansk district executive committee in Taz district. The staff included a doctor and "Cultural Armymen", as the workers of culture and education were called at the time. The "red chooms" library catered to the population in the Yelogui, Sim and Turukhan river basins. Subsequently, the "red chooms" became the principal cultural institutions, and their network steadily expanded.

In 1930, this network of cultural and educational establishments in the Yenisei North comprised the Tura cultural centre, five "red chooms", four cottage reading-rooms and one portable cinema unit.

The development of the culture and economy of the Far North required a sizeable body of national cadres. They were trained in special educational establishments, the first of which was the Northern Workers' Department at the Leningrad State University opened in 1925/26 in Detskoye Selo (the present town of Pushkin). Children from tundra and taiga areas began to study there.

A.V. Lunacharsky wrote, concerning this department in 1927: "We are doing our utmost to ensure the culturally backward nationalities a rate of progress exceeding that of the advanced nationalities, i.e., we are trying to gradually eliminate cultural distinctions between all nationalities. Today even the most backward nationalities—the Samoyeds, Tungus, Chukchi and others,—which remain at a primitive level, are getting more and more school education. We can speak proudly of our Detskoye Selo Workers' Department where these half-primitives unusually quickly assimilate the elements of civilisation, and of several students in higher educational establishments who have come from the thick of these peoples."<sup>1</sup>

The first Tungus students of the Northern Workers' Department included P. N. Putugir, N. N. Putugir, N. N. Monakhov, A. N. Kaplin, S. N. Lontogir and G. P. Salatkin.

<sup>1</sup> CPA IML, fd. 142, reg. 1, f. 107, l. 23.

The students were sent to the department by local committees for the North; all their needs were attended to by the state. Their educational level was low, but thanks to their own persistence and to the effort of their teachers, they made remarkable progress in their studies and in the assimilation of Russian culture.

In 1927, the department had a student body of 66, including 29 Tungus, 8 Ostyaks, 11 Samoyeds and 5 Gilyaks.

Students came mostly from poor families. In the period from 1926 to 1930 Northern Siberia sent 70 young men and women to the Northern Workers' Department. Many of them later became prominent officials in the Soviet North.

In 1928/29, the Workers' Department of the University of Tomsk opened a section with 30 places for native peoples. A similar section was opened by the Irkutsk Fur Institute.

Short training courses were opened to prepare personnel in the local Soviets and cooperatives.

During the period from 1926 to 1930 the Siberia Committee for the North sent 130 natives to workers' departments and institutes.

Educated young people were spreading the new, socialist culture among their kinsmen. They were the advance guard of the people's intelligentsia trained by the Communist Party and the Soviet state.

Medical services in the North, just as public education, were organised only after the October Revolution. In 1922 medical assistance was made available for 5,157 natives; 2,213 were vaccinated against small-pox, and 211 patients received treatment in a hospital.

In 1922, there was only one hospital in the Yenisei North as well as two medical stations with a staff of one doctor and four assistants—one of them was the medical assistant N. A. Filchenko.

The central and local organs of Soviet power were taking urgent measures to improve medical services in the native settlement and camps. A large measure of credit should be given to the Russian Red Cross Society which sent several medical expeditions to the Far North in 1922-23. In 1923, for instance, special teams of the Siberian Red Cross examined the inhabitants of many settlements and

camps, and rendered medical assistance to the natives in Turukhansk territory.

Work by these teams prepared the foundation for the subsequent network of medical establishments in the Yenisei North.

Medical assistants went, in 1924, to the Khatanga and Ilimpia tundra and the Turukhan area where they examined and treated the native population and organised medical stations. When an epidemic of small-pox and typhoid fever broke out in 1925 in the northern areas of the Taimyr Peninsula, medical workers and large consignments of medicines were rushed there. The epidemic was quickly stopped. This vividly illustrated the importance of medicine to the native peoples who hitherto mistrusted medicine.

Hospitals, clinics and medical stations were being opened even in the most remote localities. In 1926, six medical establishments were opened, including one each in Khatanga, Yanov Stan and Tura; in 1929 there were four hospitals with clinics, two medical stations (in Chirinda and Strelka-on-Chunya) and the locality was divided into six medical districts. A total of 255,400 rubles were spent on medical institutions in 1929/30.<sup>1</sup>

As a result, the mortality rate fell, and epidemics, which formally took thousands of lives, were stopped. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government's policy for renewal and reconstruction of the economy of the North along socialist lines raised the living standards and health of the population.

On November 13, 1929, *Izvestia* wrote: "We have firm justification in stating that the progressive extinction of the natives in the North, about which liberal-minded explorers wrote so much before the revolution, has been halted thanks to all Soviet measures carried out to improve the economy, social organisation and health standards of the natives".

By the beginning of the 1930s, the northern peoples achieved the first important successes in their social, economic and cultural development. This was the result of the assis-

<sup>1</sup> SANR, fd. 354, reg. 1, f. 219, l. 28-29.



tance rendered by the Soviet state, the fraternal peoples of the USSR, primarily the Russian people, and also the implementation of the Leninist nationalities' policy. Noting the tremendous successes achieved in the economic and cultural development of the border areas, the December Plenary Meeting of the CC CPSU in 1930 declared that the "prerequisites for accelerating the transition to the socialist development of the most backward districts, for instance, of some national areas in the Soviet East, have been tremendously increased"<sup>1</sup>.

This fully applied to the peoples of the North.

A new phase—the period of the direct struggle for socialism—began in the life of the peoples of the North.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS

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<sup>1</sup> *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions...*, Vol. 4, 1927-31, Moscow, 1970, p. 507.

The old Evenk calendar and a laser device are depicted side by side in this photopanorama. Ages have passed between the birth of the one and the other, but actually only half a century separates them in the history of the peoples of the Soviet North.

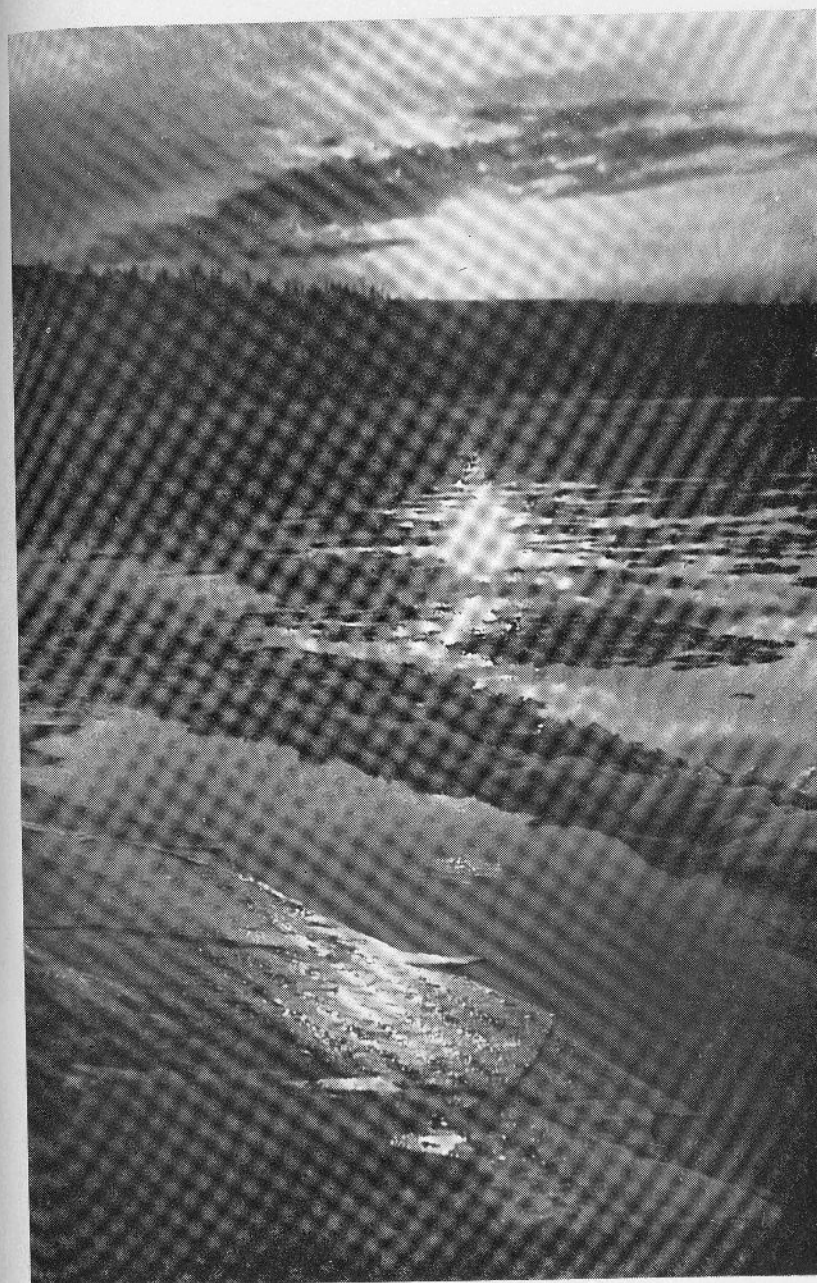
Let us turn back our thoughts to life, say, fifty years ago. We shall see the taiga, the uninhabited banks of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, forest paths and *chooms* scattered here and there.

And not a single settlement on the vast territory of what is known today as Evenkia.... On the eve of the October Revolution the indigenous population of this land—the Tungus, as the Evenks were formerly called,—the nomadic reindeer-breeders and hunters had hardly passed the phase of primitive society. This was also the lot of many other non-Russian peoples in tsarist Russia.

The new life in these lands began with the introduction to Soviet power and socialist culture of people who were thousands of years behind in their development. This process of adaptation naturally began with schooling. The sons and daughters of reindeer-breeders and hunters, who received their education in the Institute of the Peoples of the North in Leningrad in the twenties, formed the nucleus of the national intelligentsia, they became active builders of socialism.

The nomadic way of life, backwardness and fear of changes vanished in the past. Modern towns with broad avenues and multi-storey houses appeared in permafrost areas; the mineral wealth of Talnakh and Norilsk served as the foundation of modern industry. Electricity, radio and helicopters are common features of everyday life in the North. Yesterday's nomads send their children to schools, they treat patients in village hospitals, smelt copper, study the properties of minerals with the help of lasers, navigate ships and airliners and, of course, continue to hunt and breed the reindeer.

These photographs depict the past and the present of the Yenisei North.

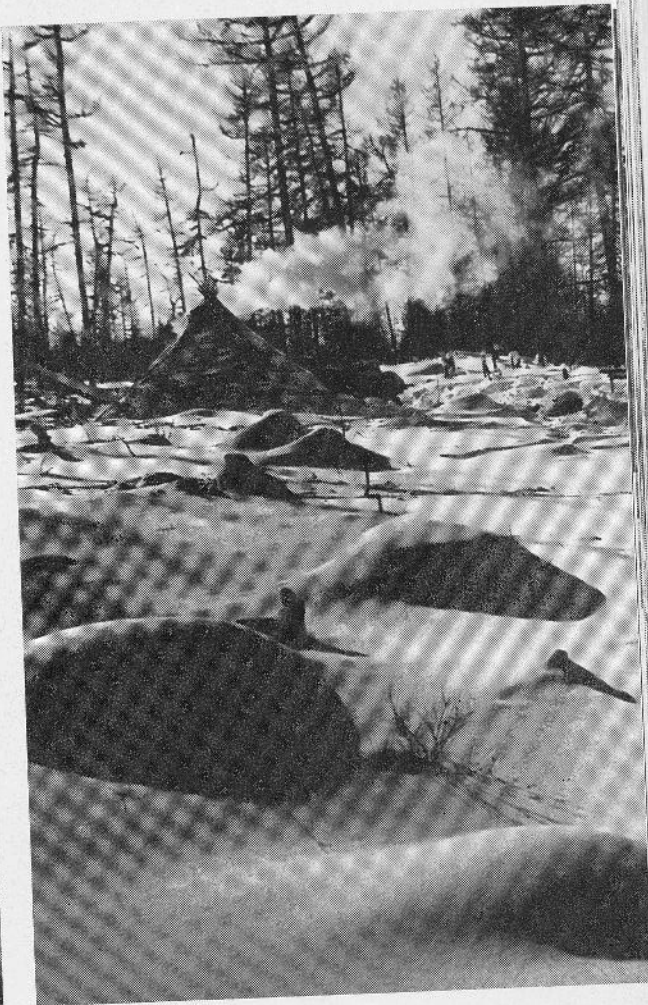


■ The freezing Taimur





■ The taiga



■ A Tungus **choom**, the dwelling of nomads





■ A hunter's hut in the taiga

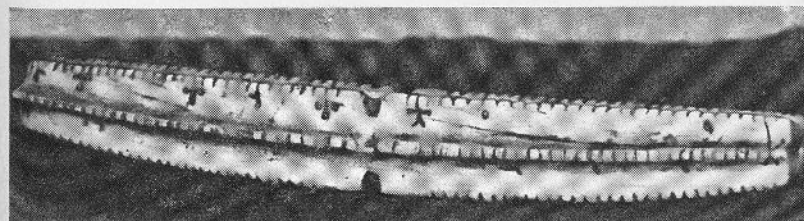


■ Polar fox

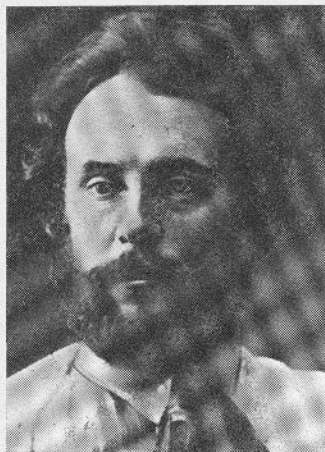


■  
Wooden idol found  
in the vicinity of  
Lake Dyupkun

■ The old Evenk calendar

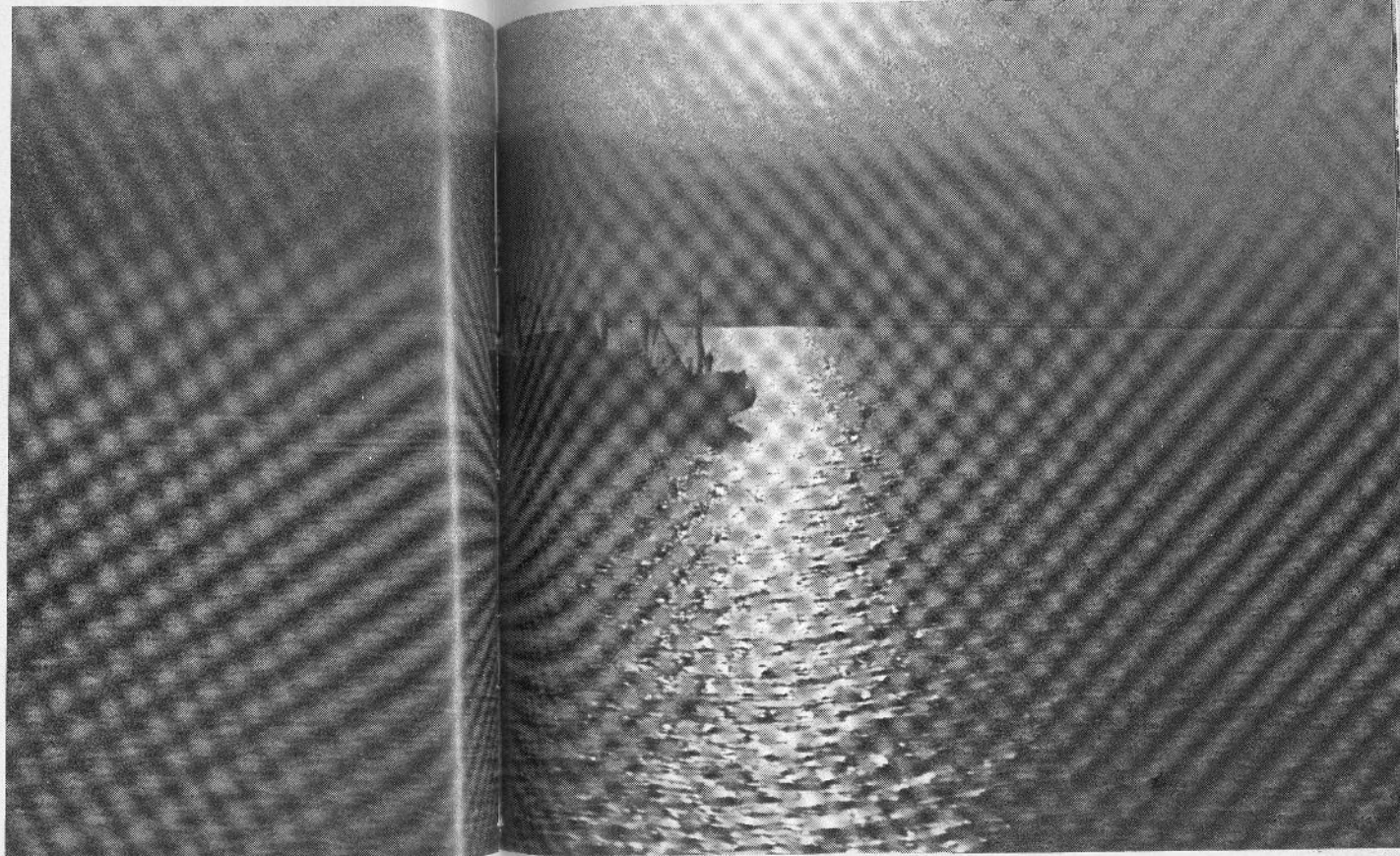




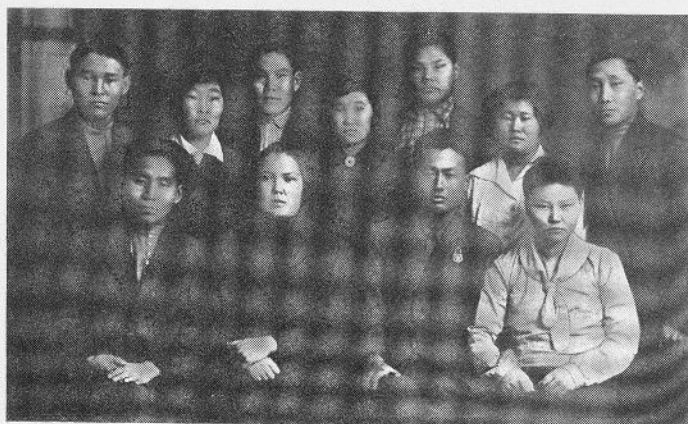


M. I. Suslov, one of the most prominent members of the Committee for the North. He helped the Evenks to set up the first elective local organs of Soviet power—the Clan Soviets

The shores of the Taimyr peninsula

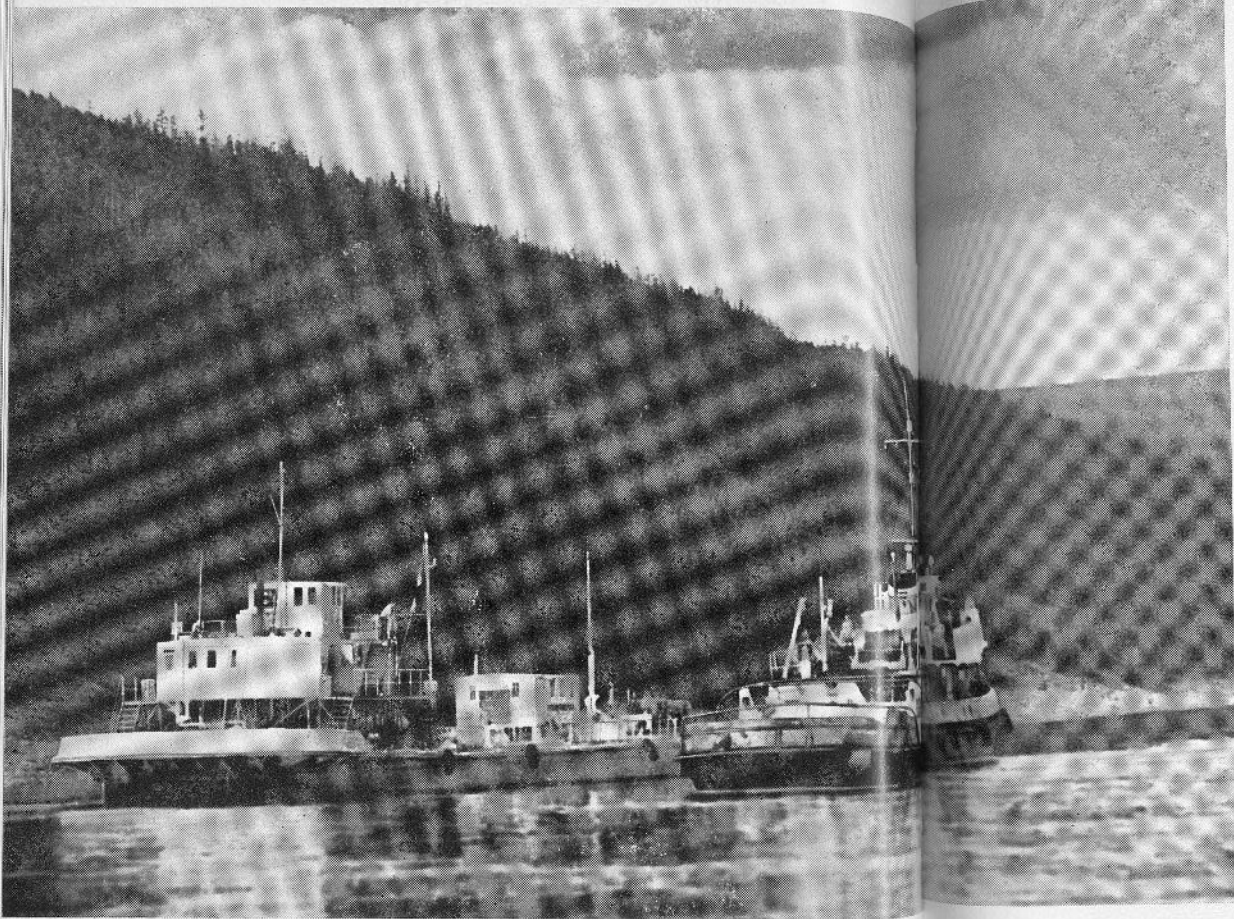


Students of the Leningrad Institute of the Peoples of the North



The first Clan Soviet elected in 1926 by Evenks from the Kurkogir clan which roamed along the banks of the Chunya and the Taimur. Right to left: Veniamin Konor, Pavel Molok (chairman), Grigory Doonov, and Lyuchetkan Machakugir





■ Summer caravan of ships on the Nizhnyaya Tunguska

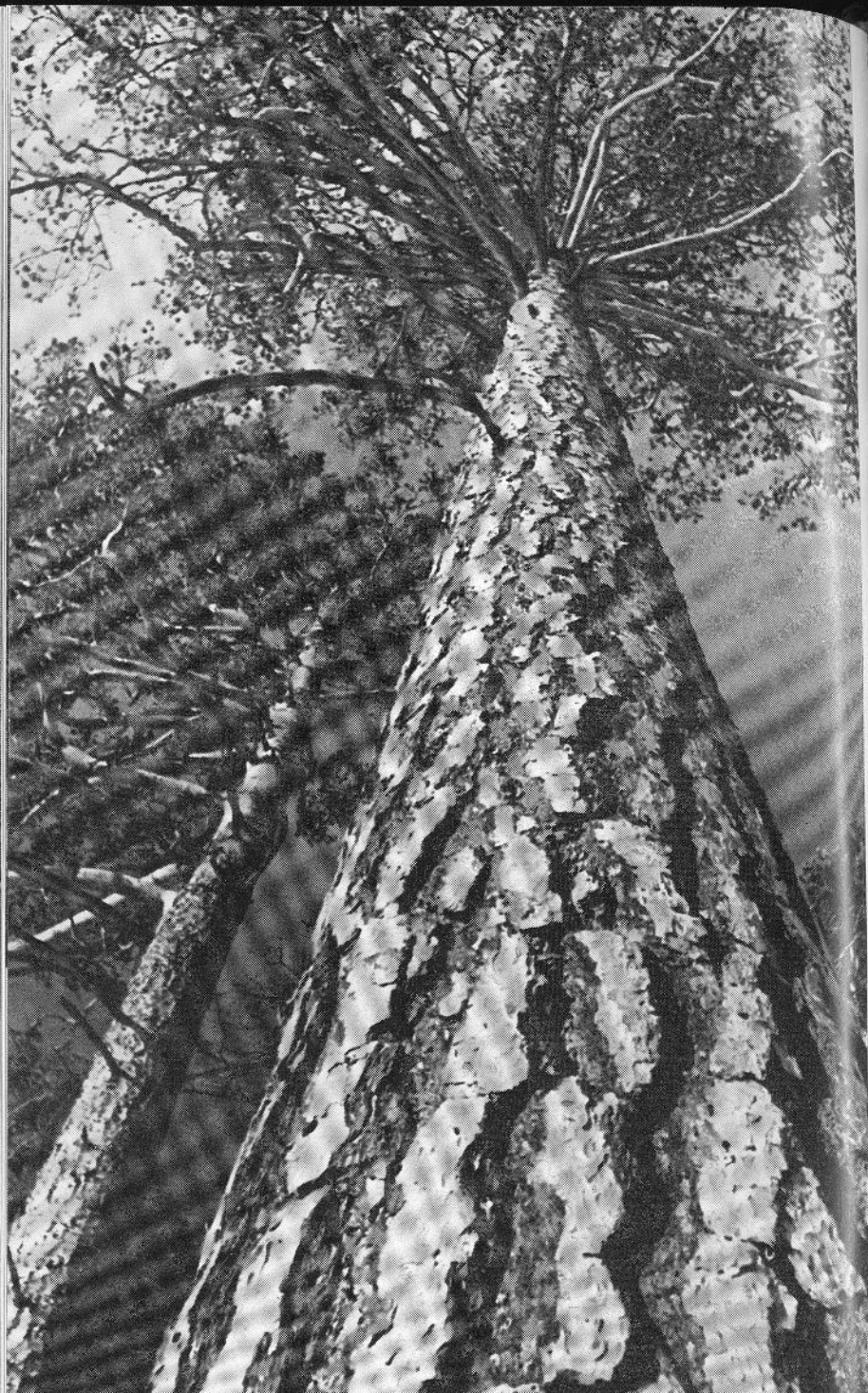


■  
A flight radio operator keeps in touch with the caravan of vessels. Planes in the Arctic help vessels on their way



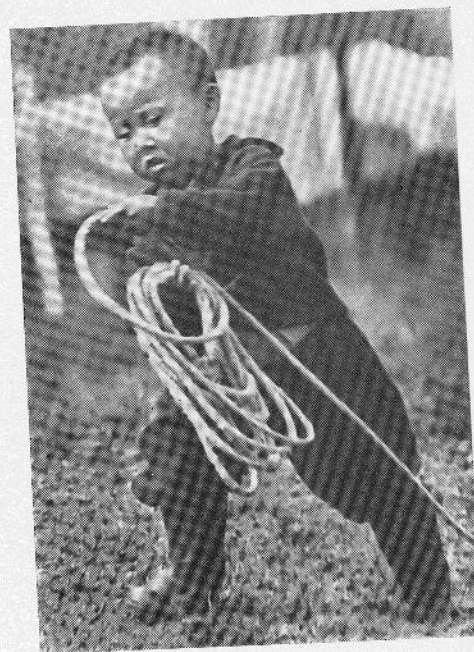
■  
Academician O. Y. Shmidt who greatly contributed to the investigations in the Arctic and its development





■  
Reindeer-breeding  
is the main occupation  
of collective farms  
and state farms in Evenkia

■  
First steps  
in reindeer-breeding



■  
The Krasnoyarsk pine  
is the world's best  
building timber





■ The settlement of Baikit. —50C!



■ Ivan Yarotsky, Taimyr's leading polar-fox trapper



■ Tura, 1932. Members of the Executive Committee of the Evenk Area Soviet

■ Konstantin Chapogir, a famous Evenk sable hunter







■  
Patients in the hospital  
in the settlement of Nidym



Participants of  
the First Congress  
of Evenk women in 1926



■  
H. I. Salatkina, First  
Secretary of  
the Baikit District  
Committee of the CPSU,  
chats with reindeer-  
breeders





Honoured Doctor of the RSFSR A. N. Deskov  
in the Tura area hospital



Major S. N. Kombagir took part  
in liberating the Soviet Baltic  
republics from the nazi invaders



In the past, the Evenks  
lived in such chooms



Norilsk, the town  
within the Polar Circle





■ A drive to school



Timofei Chapogir,  
a reindeer-breeder

■



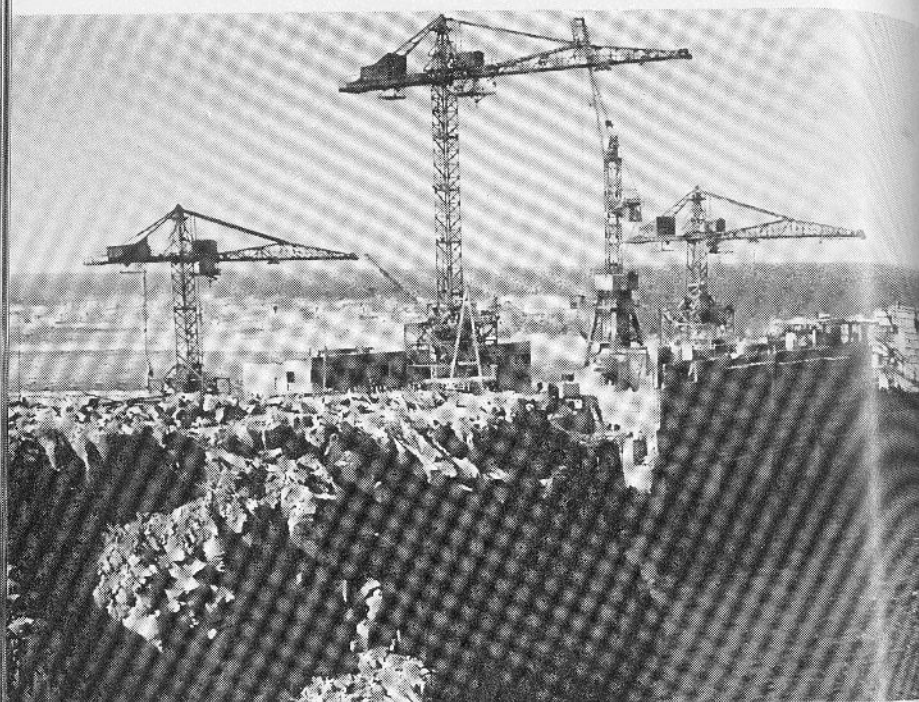


A veterinary on an inspection visit  
to the reindeer-breeders



N. K. Kaplin, now over 90,  
is the oldest inhabitant  
of Evenkia





The Ust-Khantaika hydro-electric power station in Taimyr will be one of the most powerful in the North



Delegates from Evenkia and Taimyr to the 15th Krasnoyarsk Communist Party Conference



The town of Snezhnogorsk will be built on permafrost next to the Ust-Khantaika hydro-electric power station





Ivan Udygir,  
a foremost reindeer-breeder



The monument to A. P. Zavenyagin,  
the construction chief of the Norilsk  
Mining and Metallurgical Plant

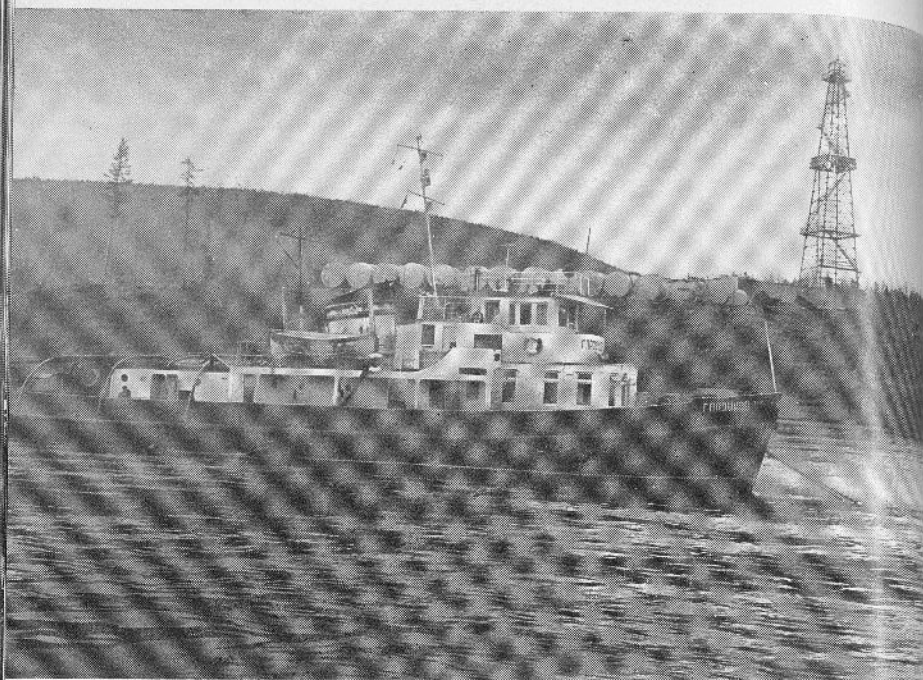


Norilsk. Smelting at  
the plant's nickel factory

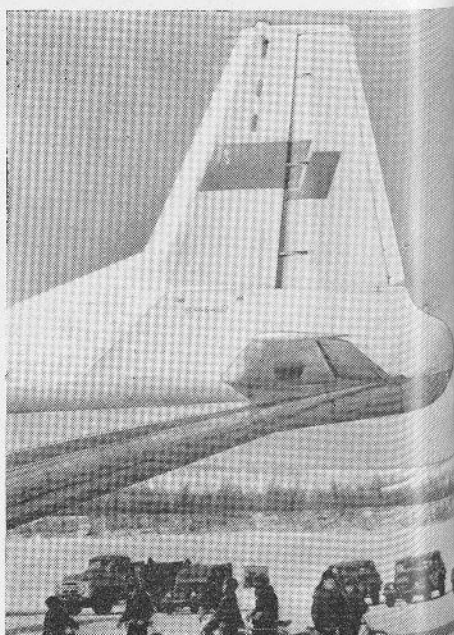
The Norilsk Mining and  
Metallurgical Plant



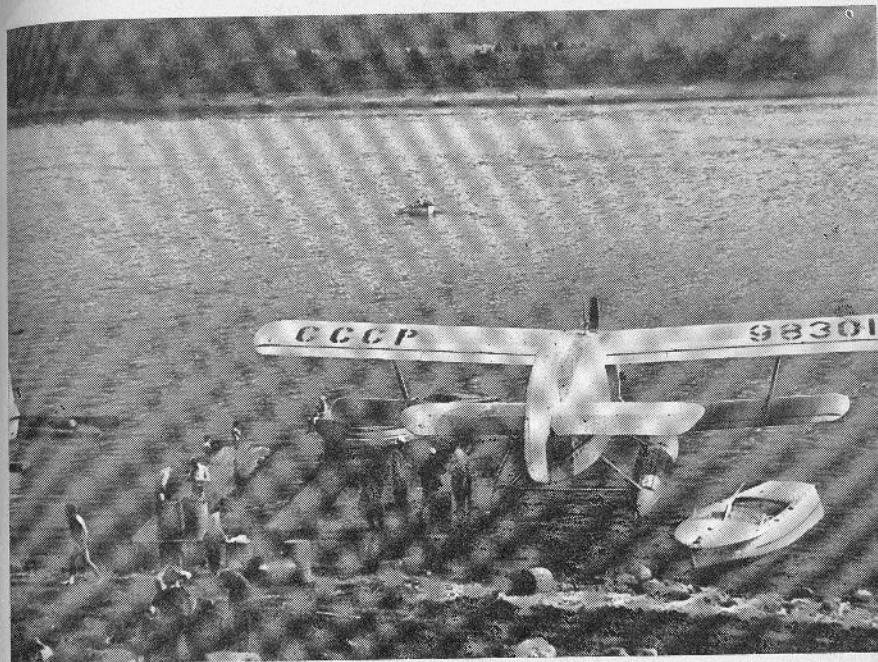




Oil prospectors on the banks  
of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska



This 'Antei' has just brought  
its cargo to the taiga



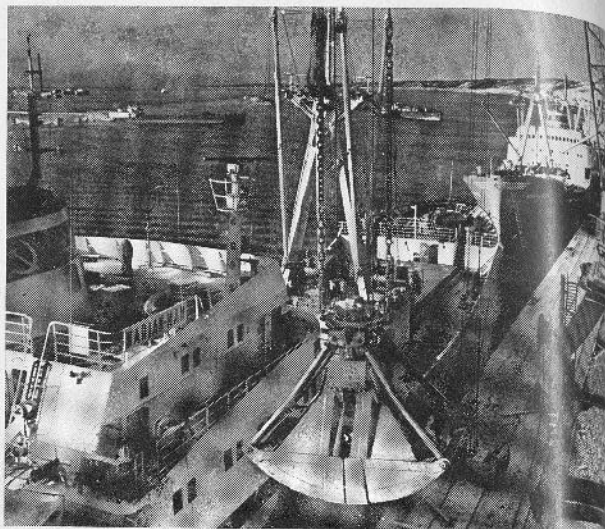
Hydroplanes are a  
transport in these  
parts



Norilsk, Lenin Street



Dudinka, the sea  
gates of the Arctic



Loading of timber  
in the port of Igarka



A geological party

Dudinka, the centre of Taimyr







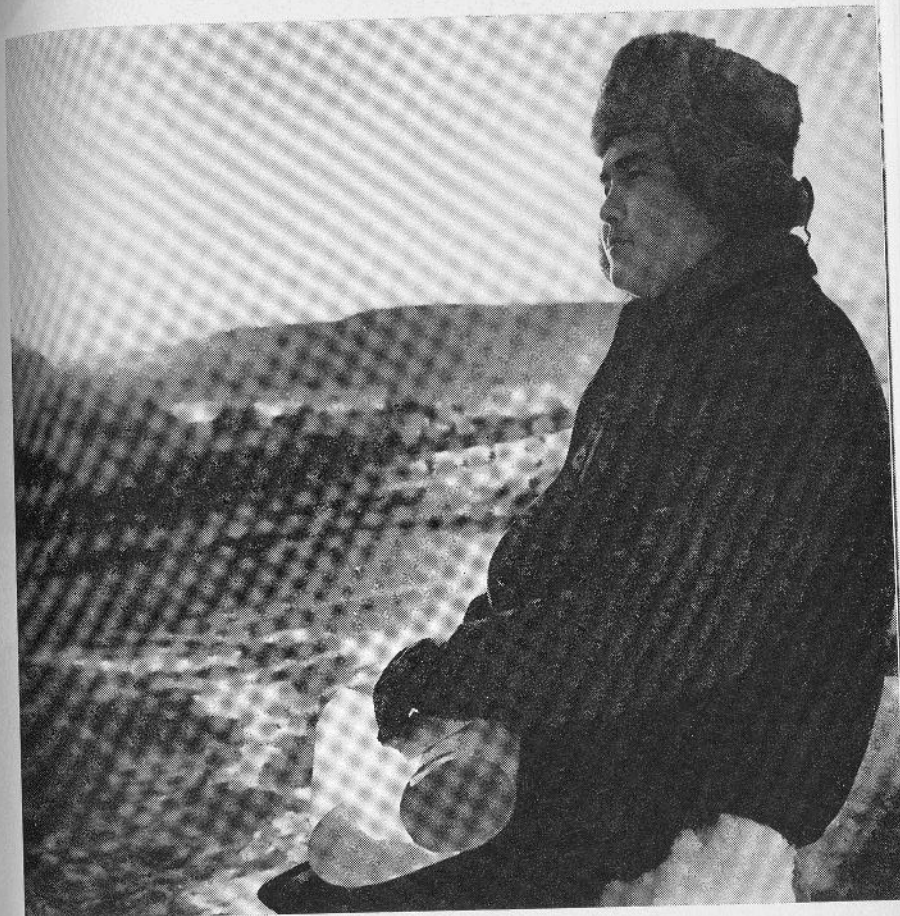
Vegetables now  
grow in Taimyr

■



Let the sun  
always shine

■



L. D. Demeshchik,  
the head architect  
in Evenkia

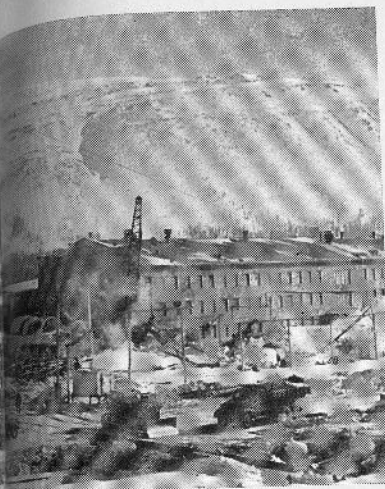
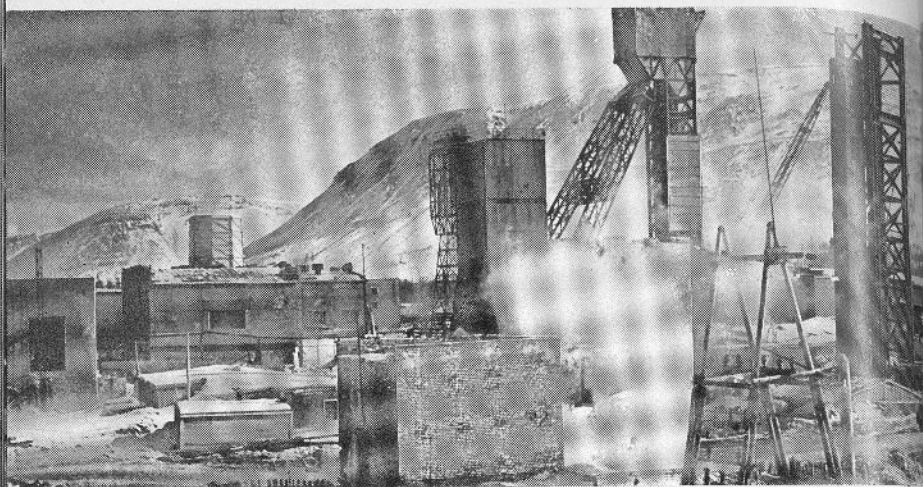
■



Taimyr. Khristina  
Yeldogir, a Nenets girl,  
during lessons at  
a zooveterinary school

■





■ The "Mayak" pit  
in Talnakh



■ The Talnakh ore contains 11 elements

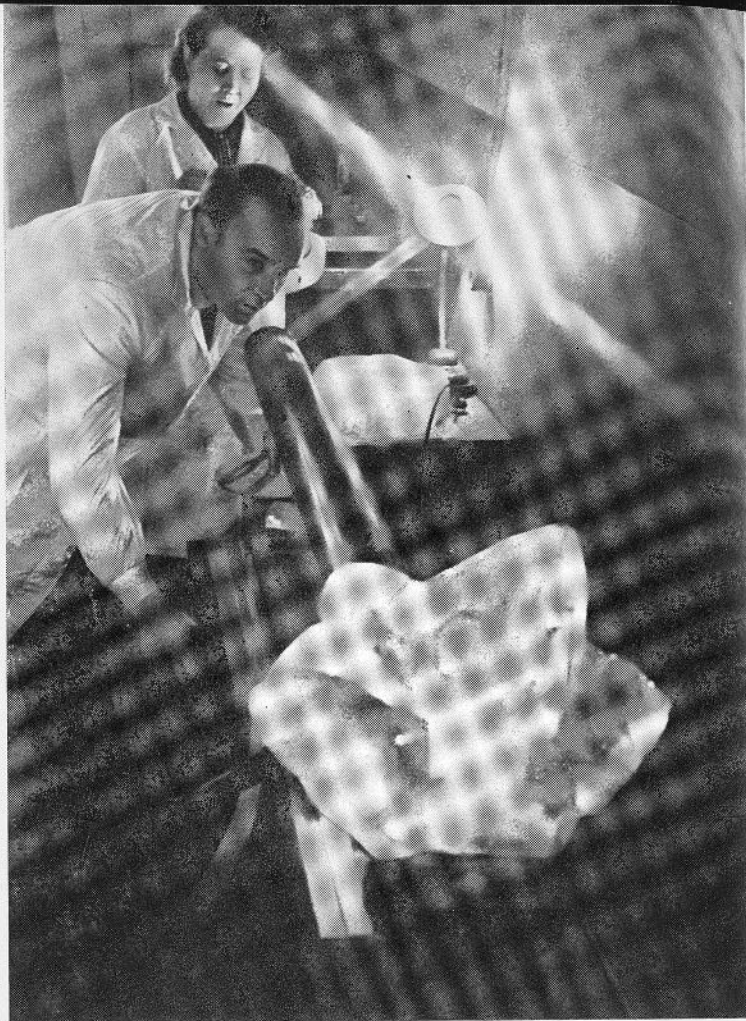


■ Talnakh



■ Miners at work



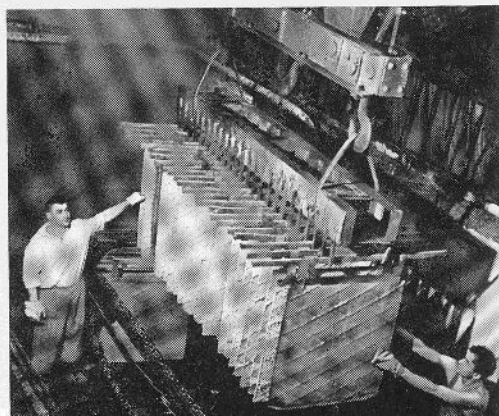


Lasers are used  
in the optical  
laboratory  
to investigate  
the properties  
of Iceland spar

■

■

The electrolysis  
of copper at the  
Norilsk Copper-  
Smelting Plant



Natural refrigerators in permafrost

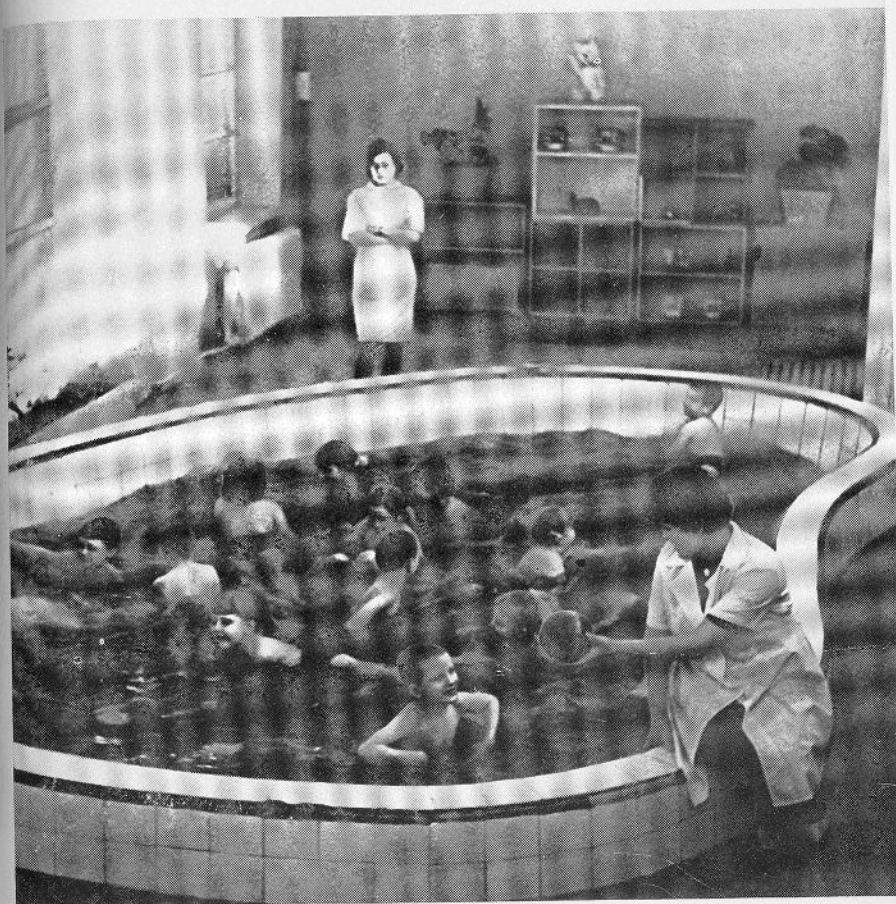
■



■ Evenk children



■ School graduates



Children in kindergarten No. 48 in Norilsk enjoy swimming all the year round

■



At the health centre  
the workers of the Norilsk  
Mining and Metallurgical  
Plant rest and receive  
medical treatment



An Evenk dance



Fresh fruit  
and vegetables  
for Norilsk



Folk crafts are safe in their hands





Amateur artists of the House of Culture in Tura

■

### 3

#### Chapter

## Decisive Successes in the Building of Socialism

### 1. Formation of National Areas

All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will not do so in exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformation in the different aspects of social life.

V. I. Lenin

The strength and wisdom of the Communist Party consist in the fact that it found concrete and specific ways and means of building socialism for all peoples in the country.

The Party has fostered in the people the spirit of socialist internationalism, rejecting even the slightest manifestations of Great-Russian chauvinism and local nationalism. Lenin said that it was necessary “*not to think only of one’s own nation, but place above it the interests of all nations, their common liberty and equality, fight against small-nation narrow-mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest*”<sup>1</sup>.

This common goal and international task of all nations in the Soviet Union, large or small, was the building of socialism. Each of these peoples contributed to the common cause.

When the construction of socialism was in full progress, it became clear that the clan administrative organisation of the peoples of the North had outlived itself. A new governing organ, corresponding to the new historical tasks faced by all the peoples of the Soviet North, was required.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 347.



The elaboration of the administrative-territorial organisation for the northern peoples was entrusted to the Committee for the North. In August 1930, the committee made to the All-Union Central Executive Committee a proposal for the formation of national areas and districts in the lands inhabited by the peoples of the North.

It should be noted that it took the central government agencies quite a long time to arrive at a decision to do so. The first national area in the Soviet North—the Nenets area—was organised on the initiative of the Nentsi themselves. During the Ninth Congress of Nenets Soviets (January 1929) in Arkhangelsk Gubernia, they demanded that “all Nentsi be unified in a single area”. They were supported by Nenets of the Malozemelskaya tundra who stated in their decision: We, the Nentsi of Malozemelskaya tundra, ask and insist that the decision of the Ninth Congress of Nenets Soviets to create a single Nenets area for unifying the Malozemelskaya, Bolshzemelskaya, Timan and Kanin tundras. . . . We, the Nentsi (Samoyeds) ask for full national rights as decreed by Lenin.”

From the experience gained by the Nenets National Area, it became clear that such administrative-territorial units corresponded most fully to the mode of life and the cultural level of the peoples of the North during the new stage of socialist construction. The innovation was subsequently spread throughout the Soviet North. This act of the Soviet state embodied Lenin's instructions to the effect that “in order to eliminate all national oppression it is very important to create autonomous areas, however small, with entirely homogeneous populations, towards which members of the respective nationalities scattered all over the country. . . . could gravitate, and with which they could enter into relations and free associations of every kind”.<sup>1</sup>

There were five basic reasons for the creation of national areas: first, the national area sets the most favourable conditions for the political, economic and cultural growth of the indigenous population; second, it helps to concentrate in one place the cadres who are familiar with local conditions (it

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 50.

was particularly important in the days when there were no local cadres); third, the expediency of national areas was corroborated by the practice of the Nenets National Area which in a short period of time, since July 1929, created favourable conditions for subsequent political, cultural and economic development of the native population; fourth, the national areas brought local organs of power closer to the native population; and fifth, they contributed to the national consolidation of the northern tribes and their ethnical convergence.

On December 10, 1930, the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee issued a decree “On the Organisation of National Associations in the Districts Inhabited by the Small Peoples of the North”, in conformity with which eight national areas and eight national districts were formed. These included:

in Urals Region: the Ostyak-Vogul area with its centre in Samarovo, and the Yamal (Nenets) area with its centre in Obdorsk;

in East-Siberia Territory: the Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) area with the centre in Dudinka; the Evenk area with its centre at the Tura centre, the Vitim-Olekminsk (Evenk) area (temporary centre in Ust-Maya) and the Khatanga (Evenk) district (centre in Yerbogachen);

in the Far Eastern Territory: the Chukotka area (temporary centre at the Chukotka cultural centre—Saint Lawrence Bay), the Okhotsk (Evenk) area (centre in the settlement of Okhotsk), the Koryak area (centre at the Penja cultural base), the Zeiya-Uchura (Evenk) district (centre at Lake Tokko), and the Dzheltulak (Evenk) district (centre in Dzheltulak);

in Yakut ASSR: the Anabar (Evenk) district (centre in Udzha), the Tulun (Evenk) district (centre in Tulun), the Vilyui-Markhin (Evenk) district (centre at the mouth of the Chona where it flows into the Vilyui), the Tukulan (Evenk) district (centre in Aldan near Tomot, and the Zhigansk (Evenk) district (centre in Zhigansk).

Thus, by the end of 1930 there were 9 national areas, including the Nenets area in Severnaya, the present-day Arkhangelsk Region, which were subdivided into 38 districts and 8 national districts. The organisation of national



areas, districts and nomadic Soviets was based on national-territorial and economic principles.

December 10, 1930 became a national holiday for all the peoples of the North, marking the birth of national autonomy and statehood.

On January 10, 1932, the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee decreed the organisation of the Aleut National District with its centre in Nikolskoye on Bering Island, and the Bistrinsky (Evenk) National District with its centre in Onovgai, in Kamchatka Region, the Far-Eastern Territory; on December 10 of the same year, the Tim (Khanti) National District (centre in Napas) was formed in Narym Area, West-Siberia Territory.

The Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) National Area was divided into four districts—Dudinka, Avam, Ust-Yenisei and Khatanga.

In February 1931, the Soviets of Eastern Siberia held their first congress in Irkutsk. The peoples of the Yenisei North were represented by the Samoyeds P. S. Bolin and A. S. Bolina, the Ostyak N. K. Mandakov, and the Dolgan M. G. Aksenov—all from the Turukhansk district electorate; and the Tungus A. B. Salatkin and T. A. Uvachan—both from the Khatanga electorate. The congress was attended by representatives of 16 nationalities of Eastern Siberia, including 8 Tungus, 2 Ostyaks, 2 Yakuts and 2 Samoyeds from the North.

During debates on the RSFSR Government's report, P. S. Bolin said: "This year we shall organise native areas—native organs of administration. I believe that this policy of the Soviet Government is absolutely correct. . . . Allow me to greet on behalf of the people of Taimyr who live in the land of snow the First Territorial Congress of Soviets; they send hearty greetings to the First Territorial Congress of Soviets of Eastern Siberia."<sup>1</sup>

The chairman of the district executive committee A. B. Salatkin on behalf of the Tungus in the Khatanga National District said: "Thanks to the correct Leninist policy conducted by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government,

we have made major advances in the reorganisation of the economy of natives along new principles. The clan Soviets have been abolished on our territory, and native Soviets, native national areas and districts have been set up instead." Salatkin went on to say that it was "necessary to complete the land-management scheme in native hunting and grazing grounds. The national areas and districts must take into consideration specific conditions and strictly adhere to the Leninist nationalities policy".<sup>1</sup>

In the resolution on the RSFSR Government's report, the First Congress of Soviets set down the following: "The Congress appreciates the correct Leninist nationalities policy conducted by the Soviet Government, particularly the policy pertaining to these national minorities in the North which have already produced a considerable number of active national Soviet and Party workers and which have made considerable progress in the areas of culture and economy.

"In view of these tasks, the government's decision to organise national areas in the North is both timely and necessary. . . .

"The congress stresses the necessity for serious attention to economic, cultural and other services for all national minorities, especially for the peoples of the North, and it insists on an uncompromising struggle against all manifestations of Great-Russian chauvinism in the work of some of the institutions and organisations in the territory."<sup>2</sup>

The Territorial Congress of Soviets elected the East-Siberian Territorial Executive Committee. The members included the Samoyed woman Anna Bolina—a non-Party collective farm reindeer-breeder; and the Tungus woman Tatianna Uvachan—a candidate-member of the Communist Party, and a collective farmer.

In June 1931, district congresses of Soviets organised national districts and elected delegates to the first area congresses of Soviets. Delegates on reindeer and in birch-bark canoes began to arrive at the area centres from all parts

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 1, 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Rezolyutsia 1-go krayevogo syezda Sovetov Vostochnoi Sibiri*, (The Resolution of the First Territorial Congress of Soviets of East Siberia), Irkutsk, 1931, p. 39.

<sup>1</sup> SAIR, fd. 600, reg. 1, f. 261, l. 42.



of the immense territory. The inhabitants of Dudinka and Tura heartily welcomed the delegates from the taiga and tundra.

The ceremonial opening of the First Congress of Soviets of the Evenk National Area took place in the evening of July 25, 1931 at the Tura cultural centre.

It was attended by 43 delegates, including 29 Evenks, 10 Russians, and 4 Yakuts. This balance fully corresponded to the national composition of the population in the area.

The delegates included 7 Communists and 2 Komsomol members. There were 2 hired workers, 23 poor men, 5 well-to-do reindeer-breeders and 13 office employees. The delegates' composition reflected the balance of social groups and the elimination of local exploiters and shamans from the Soviets.

The First Congress of Evenk Soviets elected 18 members and 7 alternate members to the presidium of the area executive committee, including chairmen of district executive committees, clan Soviets, cooperative associations, and also the first activists, i.e., the first Evenks who took, under the Party's leadership, the road to socialism.

Area and district congresses of Soviets in the Taimyr National Area were held in February and March 1932.

The formation of national areas coincided with the beginning of the struggle of the northern toilers for the victory of socialism in the vast expanses of the taiga and tundra.

The All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the RSFSR Government took into consideration the peculiar conditions of work faced by the organs of Soviet power in the Far North and, on April 20, 1932, approved the "Status of Area Congresses of Soviets and Area Executive Committees in the National Areas of the Northern Border Areas of the RSFSR". The area executive committees were given broad rights for the socialist reorganisation in the Far North. The area congresses of Soviets elected delegates not only to the congresses directly superior to them but also to the All-Russia congresses of Soviets; they ensured representation for all nationalities inhabiting the area's territory.

Village Soviets for settlers and nomad Soviets for nomads and semi-nomads were set up in the districts incorporated into the national areas.

Soviets were organised for groups of 200 people or, in some cases, for less than 200 people, depending on local conditions. The nomad Soviet was elected for a term of one year at a rate of one delegate per 30 people. Its executive organ was the presidium (provided that the Soviet had seven members), and a chairman. It was authorised to set up sections for managing economic and cultural affairs. The official language was to be the native tongue. The Soviet travelled together with the nomads.

Because of the organisation of new districts, it was necessary to organise new courts and appoint public procurators. These were organised in conformity with the general laws of the USSR, but with due consideration for local conditions as envisaged for juridical organs in the national areas and northern districts of the RSFSR.

All these measures, executed by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, completed the establishment of a united system of government for the peoples of the North, based on overall principles underlying the Soviet system of state administration. Thus, after the formation of national areas, the structure of the organs of Soviet power for the peoples of the North became more flexible to correspond to local conditions and to the general tasks of building socialism.

In 1931-32, elections were held to the Soviets in the Taimyr and Evenk national areas and the Khatanga and Turukhansk national districts on the basis of the general statute of elections of Soviets in the RSFSR.

The basic purpose of election to the Soviets in the Far North were to legalise the transition from clan Soviets to the territorial-economic organisational principle and to provide juridical recognition for the national areas and districts. During the election campaign, it was necessary to explain to the northern peoples the substance of the nationalities policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government and the specific attention given to the development of their economy, culture and material well-being, with regard for their history and the level of class and national consciousness. Attention was concentrated on work among the poor masses so as to isolate them from the influence of the local rich. In order to attract the northern peoples to the organisation



of Soviet power, it had to be explained that only in close alliance with the working class and the collective-farm peasantry of all nationalities in the USSR, could they arrive at socialism.

The election results showed that these tasks were in the main accomplished. They corroborated the political and cultural growth and higher class consciousness achieved by the working masses in the North. The majority of those elected to the Soviets represented the poor and middle segments of the population; the local exploiters and shamans were completely ousted from the Soviets.

The elections demonstrated the higher level of political activity of northern women who were gradually becoming emancipated from the shackles of class and family oppression. In the Tunguska-Chuna district of the Evenk National Area, for instance, 55 per cent of the female population took part in the elections, in the Baikit district, 52 per cent took part; 23 women—one-fourth of the total number of deputies—were elected to the nomad Soviets in the Evenk National Area; 17 women—10 per cent of the deputies—were elected to the Soviets in Taimyr Area.

During a meeting of Evenks of the Strelkovsky nomad Soviet, Olga Yastrikova objected to the candidature of the former chairman of the clan Soviet because of his coarse treatment of the people. The meeting agreed with Yastrikova and refused to elect the man. It was a really extraordinary event: only a brief interval ago men did not allow women to attend their meetings, and regarded them as inferiors, but on this occasion they not only heard a woman's arguments, but even agreed with her.

The restrictions imposed by the Soviets upon local kulaks were regarded by the women as justified. During one of the meetings, Darya Chunskaia said: "Let the kulaks pay higher taxes. . . . The Soviet power is doing right when it takes more from kulaks than from poor people."<sup>1</sup>

These facts indicated that women were becoming active participants in the building of socialism.

The election campaign in 1931-32 was conducted in conditions of sharp class struggle. Local kulaks and sha-

mans, who felt that their end was approaching as a result of the establishment of new, socialist forms of life, fiercely resisted the measures enacted by the Soviet authorities. The class consciousness of the poor and middle segments was increasing; they waged a stubborn struggle against the rich and the shamans, freeing themselves from their influence.

However, the local rich were still economically powerful. They retained most of the reindeer—the principal source of wealth for the northern peoples. In 1929, the poor in the Taimyr National Area owned only 6.1 per cent of the total number of reindeer, the middle stratum owned 55 per cent and the rich owned 36.6 per cent, (the remaining 2.3 per cent belonged to state organisation). In 1932, kulaks, who accounted for only 8 per cent of all households in the Evenk National Area, owned 59 per cent of the reindeer herd, while 59 per cent of the poor households owned only 17 per cent.

The kulaks, in possession of better hunting gear, also held an advantageous position in procuring furs.

So, conditions encouraging the economic dependence of the poor upon the rich still existed. Many customs and survivals of the past—clan mutual assistance, guardianship, joint grazing of reindeer, etc.—veiled kulak exploitation and class contradictions, and impeded the growth of class consciousness among the poorest segments of the population.

Local kulaks retained considerable influence over the poor and middle segments. The poor sometimes lacked the courage to speak out openly against the kulaks.

Shamans were the true allies of the kulaks in their struggle against Soviet efforts directed towards the socialist reorganisation of the economy and life of the peoples of the North.

The kulaks and shamans came out against Soviet power, and in some instances even tried to take power into their own hands. In the Lapto-Salyan nomad Soviet (Taimyr National Area), for instance, the kulaks took charge of the election campaign and disrupted the elections. They declared: "We do not want the Soviets. Down with the Soviets!"

The kulaks frequently persecuted activists among the poor. In the Rossomazhiye camp, for example, they led a Nganasan to suicide only because he had been the first to join a collective farm and had persuaded others to follow suit.

<sup>1</sup> *Sovetsky Sever*, 1934, No. 1, p. 88.



Of course errors as well as distortions of Party policy were observed during the organisation of national statehood for the peoples of the North. The Communist Party always warned local officials against "cavalry charges" in the formerly backward districts, and it called upon them to take into consideration local conditions, customs and life patterns; it insisted on caution, tact and foresight in the implementation of the nationalities policy. But some local officials brushed aside these instructions. In 1932, for instance, an excessive tax was imposed on prosperous natives in the northern sector of Ilimpia district (Yessei, Kirbei, Chirinda); in addition bureaucratic modes of administration and coarse treatment of the people were tolerated. That even resulted in a measure of disorganisation among the Soviets. The local kulaks were quick to take advantage of these distortions of Party policy. In April 1932 they organised the migration of Yakuts from the Yessei and Kirbei trade posts to Yakutia where, they argued, the "government was better".

While fanning the flames of local nationalism, the kulaks aimed the heaviest blow against Russian officials and activists, trying to discredit them.

But the peoples of the North realised that only together with the Russian people could they build socialism. This idea was aptly expressed by I. F. Bayaki, who declared at the First Congress of Soviets of the Evenk National Area: "The Evenks must, together with the Russians, Yakuts and other peoples work for the consolidation of the Soviet state, which is working for the well-being of all peoples."

The friendship between the peoples of the Yenisei North, the fraternal Russian people and other peoples of the USSR, grew stronger in the joint struggle to induce an upsurge in the productive forces and against age-old economic and cultural backwardness.

The national areas helped to consolidate the different clans and tribes into a single national organism, founded on economic and cultural ties. Prior to the organisation of the Evenk National Area, the Evenks inhabiting the basins of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, were aligned in two independent districts—the Ilimpia and Baikit. These two clans had never had any economic or cultural ties; mutual hostility had been in evidence. The na-

tional area brought them together; the Evenks from other territories—Khatanga district (Irkutsk Region), Turukhansk district, and later from Buryatia, Yakutia and the Far East—began to gravitate to it.

Similar processes were in evidence in the other areas of the Soviet North.

When the Taimyr National Area was formed, it incorporated part of the territory of the Khatanga-Anabar district of the Yakut ASSR, inhabited by Dolgans. Thus, the Dolgans, previously scattered over this territory, were unified in the single Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) National Area.

Village Soviets were organised in the Yenisei North for the small nationalities who were left out of the national areas. The Turukhansk district, for instance, had two national rural Soviets—the Sulomai Soviet for Kets and the Sym Soviet for Evenks.

In their long history it was only under Soviet power that the peoples of the North won national autonomy and national statehood.

In 1933, Mikhail Kalinin, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, noted that "there may be observed a continual growth in national formations and a consolidation of those already in existence. Ten national areas, 250 national districts and 5,300 national village Soviets have been organised. . . . The Soviet system provides the full opportunity for the development of culture—national in form and socialist in content—of large as well as small nationalities inhabiting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics".<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the Yenisei North welcomed with great enthusiasm the organisation of national areas. G. Safronov, a delegate to the First Congress of Soviets of the Evenk National Area from Baikit district, said: "The Party and the Soviet power are pursuing a correct policy in placing us on an equal level with other nationalities and in organising the Evenk area. They thus are helping us reorganise our life for the better."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tretiya sessiya TSIK SSSR 6-go Soziya* (The Third Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, Third Convocation), Bulletin No. 1, Moscow, 1933, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Sovietky Sever*, 1931, No. 10, p. 23.



Area Party organisations were set up together with the national areas. They began to direct economic and cultural development, and guided organisational and political work. Instructions from the CC CPSU helped the new Party organisations in socialist construction.

Of great importance for the future of socialist construction in the Far North was the decision "On the Forms of Collectivisation in the Districts of the Peoples of the Far North", which the CC CPSU passed on September 1, 1932.<sup>1</sup>

In a special letter, the Party's Central Committee explained the decision. The letter was transmitted by radio to all Party area committees in the North as a Central Committee directive.

The radiogram said that contrary to the Party's directives on the collectivisation in national economically backward regions, the local Party and Soviet organisations in many districts of the Far North had not taken into consideration specific conditions in the districts in the Far North, instead they had executed mass collectivisation, established communes and overlooked the simplest forms of production cooperatives.

To make things worse, collectivisation was imposed by bureaucratic methods; the principle of voluntariness in the collectivisation of cows, reindeer and hunting gear (rifles, traps), dogs and even dwellings (*chooms*) was violated. A hunting and trades artel with complete collectivisation of reindeer was advanced as the basic form of collectivisation.

These mistakes, committed in some parts of the Far North, were used by the kulak-shaman elements to promote their anti-Soviet aims, particularly so in the Taimyr Area of East-Siberia Territory.

The CC CPSU instructed all Party organisations in the Far North as follows:

To focus attention on the organisation of only the primary forms of production cooperation;

If the necessary conditions for strengthening and developing the hunting and trades artels were absent, to reorganise them into simple production associations. To forbid categorically the organisation of communes;

<sup>1</sup> *Mestniye organi vlasti* . . . , p. 133.

The basic task was to be the organisational and economic strengthening of primary production-cooperation associations by supplying them with the implements of production and, primarily, by organising and allocating public hunting and grazing grounds, excluding the kulaks;

To allocate immediately the required number of reindeer for the individual needs of collective farmers in those collective farms (artels) which could be retained if they were sufficiently strong, given the indispensable condition that the farmers themselves wanted to retain the collective farm (artel);

To take urgent steps to liquidate debts incurred in the procurement of reindeer from collective farms and individual owners for state-farm herds;

To promote Party and Komsomol workers from among the natives to local executive offices and to train them politically so as to consolidate the Far Northern districts.

The CC CPSU helped the area Party organisations to correct their mistakes and to expand organisational and cultural work for the mobilisation of the native population to build socialism.

Although the area Party organisations had a limited membership, they guided the struggle of the people for creating the foundation of socialism in the North. In March 1931, the Evenk area Party organisation had only 10 members and 7 candidate members, of whom 7 were Evenks; in August 1932 there were 17 Party members and 8 candidate members—all united in four Party cells.

In July 1931, there were 68 Communists (among them 2 Dolgans and 6 Nentsi) in the Taimyr area Party organisation, and in August 1932 there were 163 Communists, including 55 representatives of the peoples of the North.<sup>1</sup>

The Evenks P. S. Burmakin, N. A. Chapogir and I. A. Miroshko, the Nentsi P. S. Bolin, and N. A. Silkin, the Dolgans T. M. Stateikin, M. G. Aksenov and others became the first Communists among the peoples of the North. As time went, the area Party organisations regularly replenished their ranks from among the more advanced people of the North, the active builders of socialism.

<sup>1</sup> PAIRC, fd. 123, reg. 7, f. 40, l. 34; f. 495, l. 44.



In December 1934, the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee passed a decree "On the Reorganisation into Smaller Units of the West-Siberia and East-Siberia Territories and the Formation of New Regions in Siberia". This decree marked the birth of Krasnoyarsk Territory comprised of the Evenk and Taimyr national areas and the Turukhansk district. The Khatanga National District was incorporated in the new Irkutsk Region.

The election to the Soviets in 1934-35 summed up the results and the initial achievements of socialist construction in the national areas and districts of the Far North. They opened broad prospects for the future.

The election results showed a rise in political activity among the national population. In the Taimyr National Area, 80 per cent of the electorate participated in the elections (62.5 per cent in 1931-32). Participation by women voters increased from 44.1 to 62.5 per cent for the respective period.

In 1931, 147 people were elected to nomad and village Soviets, in 1933—181, and in 1935—243. In 1931 women accounted for 22.4 per cent of the elected deputies, and in 1935 for 23.8 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Like the preceding elections, the elections in 1934-35 were held in difficult conditions of resistance from kulaks and shamans, who did their best to disrupt the campaign. However, they were rebuffed by the masses of poor and middle natives whose political awareness had grown; advanced people, active builders of socialism were elected to the Soviets.

In the Evenk National Area, 57 per cent of the deputies elected to nomad Soviets represented the poor and hired workers, 17 per cent represented the middle stratum, and 26 per cent represented office employees. In 1934 women were represented by 26.5 per cent of the deputies, compared with 20 per cent in 1931-32. In the Taimyr National Area, 62.6 per cent of the deputies represented the poor and the hired workers. More than half of the deputies were elected for the first time.

<sup>1</sup> SATNA, fd. 10, reg. 1, f. 11, l. 8-9.

What were the results of the implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy conducted by the Communist Party during the five years subsequent upon the organisation of the national areas?

In 1935 the Taimyr National Area consisted of four districts, comprising 18 nomad, 2 village and 1 settlement Soviets.

As of January 1, 1936, the population was 11,110, of which 6,733 aborigines.

During these five years, the area produced 16 million rubles' worth of furs, 11,670 tons of fish, and 372,000 rubles' worth of reindeer hides.

In 1936 the area became the scene of mass collectivisation. In 1931 only 3.8 of the households were involved in the collectivisation, compared with 22.1 per cent in 1935.

By the beginning of 1936 there were 4 mixed-industries artels and 15 simplest production associations (SPA) comprising 319 households. The cash incomes of collective farms rose from 430,000 rubles in 1932 to 1,355,700 rubles in 1935. Average income per farm rose from 1,563 to 4,120 rubles.

New successes were achieved in cultural development. In 1935/36 there were 23 schools in the area (18 primary national schools, including 9 mobile schools for nomads); there were 58 teachers. The schools were attended by 586 pupils, 273 of whom were native (47 per cent of all school-age children).

The network of cultural-educational establishments was expanded. In 1935 the Taimyr area had 6 "red chooms", 2 cultural centres, 3 clubs, 7 libraries and 6 film projectors.

The 12 medical institutions (5 hospitals for 75 patients, 7 medical stations) had a staff of 15 doctors (including 2 dentists) and 17 junior practitioners.

During this period, the area's budget increased from 197,400 to 2,085,500 rubles; overall expenditures amounted to 6,540,900 rubles, of which 3,223,200 rubles were designated for the development of economy.

The increased sales of manufactured goods and food-stuffs helped to improve the living standards of the population in the area. In 1931 the population bought only 2,411,000 rubles' worth of goods, compared with 9,746,300



rubles' worth in 1935. The number of trading posts and shops was increased from 33 to 57.

The numerical strength of the cadres of local origin was growing. In 1934-35 higher and special secondary schools accepted 54 students from Taimyr. In 1935 52 executive posts were occupied by natives, compared with 22 in 1931. The 19 chairmen of nomad Soviets included 6 Dolgans, 4 Yakuts, 6 Nentsi, 2 Nganasans, and 1 Evenk. Many talented representatives of the local nationalities were promoted to leading posts in Party and Soviet organizations.

Soviet Evenkia had achieved much by its fifth anniversary. The Evenk area comprised three districts with 18 nomad Soviets. The population reached 6,485, of whom 3,638 were Evenks and 712 were Yakuts. The chairmen of district executive committees and nomad Soviets were elected from among the Evenks and Yakuts.

In 1936 the area had 51,200 reindeer; it produced 2,387,600 rubles' worth of furs.

The economic might of the kulak-shaman elements was seriously impaired; the number of reindeer they owned dropped from 57 per cent in 1932 to 26.4 per cent in 1936. The land-management scheme allocated the best hunting and grazing grounds to cooperative associations and to the poor and middle segments of the population.

By 1936 there were 25 SPAs uniting 589 households in the area. During the five-year period, the number of households participating in collectivisation increased from 4 to 52.6 per cent; 5 SPAs were organised in 1936 alone.

Great successes were achieved in cultural development. In 1936 Evenkia had 19 schools (only 2 in 1931), including 5 primary boarding schools. The number of pupils reached 811, including 265 Evenks and Yakuts; 64 per cent of native children were already going to schools.

The network of medical establishments was also considerably expanded. The area had 5 hospitals and 7 medical stations with a staff of 12 doctors. The local population willingly accepted medical aid. In 1935 the number of patients who applied to clinics reached 25,800, compared with only 5,000 in 1931.

Trade turnover increased from 134,000 to 11,623,000 rubles. The budget of the Evenk area increased from 134,800 to 2,552,100 rubles.

Those were the first steps and the first successes of the peoples of the Yenisei North in their efforts to build a socialist society. A strong foundation for socialism in the North was established.

The members of a delegation from Taimyr and Evenkia sent to Moscow in the middle of 1936 proudly reported these successes to the Central Committee of the CPSU.

The delegation included the most outstanding people from the national areas who had personally taken part in the construction of socialism—famous hunters, the best reindeer-breeders and representatives of the emerging national intelligentsia.

The delegation was received by M. I. Kalinin, member of the Politbureau of the CC CPSU and Chairman of the USSR Central Executive Committee and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. The head of the Soviet state inquired into the development of culture and economy in the Taimyr area, and also into the area's natural wealth and minerals.

The delegation made a comprehensive report to the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Having discussed the report, on October 20, 1936, the Presidium passed a resolution "On the Report of the Taimyr Area Executive Committee on Economic and Cultural Development Over the Past Five Years". The area was to be given great assistance to stimulate its development. Collective farms and collective farmers were to receive 120,000 rubles in credits for purchasing cattle, horses and reindeer, 118,700 rubles for settling the nomadic population, and 635,000 rubles for expanding the trade network. In 1936-37 the Taimyr National Area spent 21 million rubles on cultural and economic development.

Upon returning to Taimyr, the members of the delegation reported the details of their trip to Moscow to meetings of the area's people.

The report by the Evenk area Executive Committee was heard by the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars, which, on October 25, 1936, adopted the resolution "On the Devel-



opment of the Economy and Culture in the Evenk National Area". The decision took note of successes achieved in the development of the economy and culture and spoke of further assistance.

A new and bright page in the life of the peoples of the North was opened by the Constitution of the USSR (1936)—the Constitution of triumphant socialism and Soviet democracy.

The peoples of the Yenisei North actively participated in the nationwide discussion of the draft of the Constitution. They were fully aware of its profound internationalist content.

The Evenk S. Churkin said: "Formerly all peoples were hostile to one another. Now we see that there is no longer any enmity between the various nationalities in the Soviet Union. All nations enjoy equal rights. We achieved this thanks to the Leninist nationalities policy."<sup>1</sup>

When the Constitution was adopted, the peoples of the North began to live in conformity with the common statutes set for all peoples and nations in the USSR without exception. Moreover, their historical progress coincided with the historical development of all the peoples in the Soviet state.

Under the Constitution of 1936, each national area obtained the right to elect a deputy to the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet, regardless of the size of the population. This was a manifestation of the genuine democracy of the Soviet system.

Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were held on December 12, 1937.

The citizens of the Evenk electoral area nominated A. D. Davidkin, a Komsomol member and chairman of the Ilimpia district Executive Committee, as their candidate deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet; the citizens of the Taimyr electoral area nominated K. D. Yamkin, a team leader of reindeer breeders.

During the elections, the voters demonstrated a high level of political activity and boundless loyalty to the Leninist Party and the Soviet Government. In the Evenk

<sup>1</sup> *Evenkiiskaya novaya zhizn*, January 1, 1937.

electoral area, 99.1 per cent of the electorate took part in voting; 99.7 per cent of them voted for candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-Party people.

The elections to the local Soviets of Working People's Deputies were held on December 24, 1939.

In conformity with the Constitution of the RSFSR, the Evenk National Area organised 299 electoral areas; the Taimyr National Area set up 366 electoral areas.<sup>1</sup>

More than 1,500 local inhabitants worked in the electoral commissions, which served as schools for administering state affairs.

Wide-scale propaganda work was carried out among the people during the election campaign; 300 nomination meetings were arranged, attended by 6,500 voters.<sup>2</sup>

The voters displayed a high level of activity during the elections; 98.5 per cent of the electorate took part in the voting, and 99.6 per cent of them cast their ballots for the candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-Party people.

Evenkia elected 299 deputies to the local Soviets, and Taimyr—366 deputies. They were all candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-Party people and all steered in the struggle for socialism. The elected deputies included 102 Evenks and Yakuts; 82 deputies were Communists; 77 were Komsomol members; 75 were women.<sup>3</sup>

Thirty people were elected to the Evenk Area Soviet of Working People's Deputies—the supreme organ of state power in the area; six of them were women.

The concrete and principal tasks of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies in the North during the construction of socialism were as follows:

Politics: consolidation of the Soviets as local organs of state power and of the expansion of Soviet democracy; reinvigoration of the Executive Committees of Soviets;

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 9, f. 2, l. 25.

<sup>2</sup> SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 96, l. 500.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., f. 2, l. 2-3.



broader mobilisation of local activists for work in the Soviets; enhancement of the political consciousness of the working people; consolidation of the friendship and fraternity of peoples according to the principles of proletarian internationalism; strict implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy.

**Economy:** complete collectivisation of native households in the North; organisational and economic consolidation of the SPAs; reorganisation of SPAs into the higher form of collective farms—the agricultural artels; improvement of the organisation of labour and of accounting in collective farms; organisation and development of state farms; further development of the basic branches of collective-farm production—reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing; creation of centres of the socialist industry; development of transport and means of communication (air transport, post, telegraph and telephone services, etc.).

**Culture:** complete elimination of illiteracy; expansion of the network of general schools, particularly of seven-year and secondary schools; expansion of the network of cultural and educational establishments; development of national written languages; training and promotion of ethnic cadres in all fields of public life; further improvement in cultural standards.

**Living standards:** higher profitability of collective and state farms; development of Soviet trade and improvement of the supply network; expansion and the improvement of medical institutions and of their services to the population, particularly the aboriginal population.

**Everyday life:** creation of settlements for nomads; selection of economic centres for collective farms; building of housing and production facilities.

The carrying out of these tasks was essential for the construction of socialism in the North. The Party and Soviet organisations had to work painstakingly for the further improvement and development of socialist relations.

## 2. Establishment of the Socialist Economy

Due to the specific features of the social, economic and historical development of the peoples of the North, collectivisation became the basic and decisive element in the creation of the socialist economy, and in the transformation of the economic modes, as well as in social consciousness and psychology.

The policy of collectivisation was dictated by the entire course of socialist construction, it conformed to the objective law of the development of the peoples of the North. The local economy, diffused and fragmented as it was, and based on primitive means and implements of production, could not ensure even simple reproduction; it was stagnant and wholly dependent on elemental forces. It was life itself that urged the peoples of the North to take the road of collective economy.

Collectivisation was initiated by integrated cooperation, which gave birth to associations of hunters, fishermen and reindeer-breeders modelled to coincide with the way of life and the economy of the native population. These associations satisfied the production and consumer needs of the native economy and became the elementary form of co-operatives. Associations paved the way to mass collectivisation.

Mass collectivisation in the Far North took place in social and economic conditions differing from those existing in the central areas of the Soviet Union. The development of collective farms in the North called for distinctive forms and methods by virtue of the strong vestiges of patriarchal and clan relations in existence and of the primitive state of the economy as well as the extremely low level of prevailing cultural standards.

Some scholars asserted that the primitive or clan production associations (collective forms of grazing reindeer, hunting and fishing) resembled or were even identical to socialist production relations, and that these vestiges of patriarchal and clan relations could promote mass collectivisation without incurring class struggle or hardships.



Those who urged this approach did not realise the deep changes which occurred in clan associations. Due to the development of social relations, power in the clans had already fallen into the hands of the rich who were concealing their class exploitation of the working masses under the cloak of patriarchal and clan relations.

The following table illustrates how the basic implements of production were distributed among the social groups in the Evenk National Area in 1931-32.<sup>1</sup>

| Social group           | Number of households, % | Means of production, % |        |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------|
|                        |                         | Reindeer               | Rifles |
| Poor natives . . . .   | 59.7                    | 11.4                   | 43.0   |
| Middle natives . . . . | 32.0                    | 15.1                   | 44.8   |
| Kulaks . . . . .       | 8.3                     | 73.5                   | 12.2   |
|                        | 100.0                   | 100.0                  | 100.0  |

Thus sharp class differentiation existed in the area on the eve of collectivisation—poor and middle households (91.7 per cent) owned only 26.5 per cent of the total number of reindeer, while the remainder belonged to the rich who, accounted for only 8.3 per cent of the total number of households in the area.

The kulaks also owned a sizable portion of the basic weapons of the hunt. This is why the poor often found themselves under the yoke of the kulak; a burden made all the heavier by vestiges of clan relations.

A resolution, adopted by a conference of integrated co-operatives, stated: "The economic dependence of poor and middle masses, particularly of nomads, on the kulaks and semi-feudal lords is intensified by the vestiges of clan relations still persisting in some places. These economic relations and life patterns constitute the peculiar nature of the class

<sup>1</sup> N. P. Nikulshin, *Pervobitniye proizvodstvenniye ob'yedineniya i sotsialisticheskoye stroitel'stvo u Evenkov* (Evenk Primitive Production Associations and Construction of Socialism), Leningrad, 1939, p. 15.

struggle in the North and cannot be ignored in approaching the social and technical reconstruction of the northern economy."

The local rich, moreover, seized the best hunting, fishing and grazing grounds.

They had numerous traps for fur animals, and compelled their workers to make the rounds of the traps to retrieve the catch.

There was nothing in common between the clan associations and the collective farms; rather they were completely different in their social nature. The transition of clan associations to socialist forms of economy (collective farms in the forms of SPAs or agricultural artels) signified a qualitative leap towards the new forms of production relations—relations based on socialist principles.

Frederick Engels wrote: "In effect, nowhere has agrarian communism, come down from the tribal system, ever evolved anything out of itself except its own disintegration." And he added: "All the tribal communities arising before the emergence of commodity production and private exchange have only this in common with the future socialist society, that certain things, the means of production, are held as communal property and are in common use by certain groups. But this common feature alone does not yet enable the lower social form to grow into a future socialist society."<sup>1</sup>

The clan associations in the North appeared by dint of the extremely low level of development marking the productive forces and of man's dependence on the forces of nature. Parallel with the development of the productive forces, the clan associations began to be dominated by rich clan members, and became a form of social relations masking the class exploitation of the toiling masses.

The collective farms, as a form of socialist economy, appeared at the new and higher phase of the development of society's productive forces, on the basis of large-scale industry, advanced science, engineering and culture. The collective farms in the North were organised concurrently

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 402 and 403.



with the elimination of complicated vestiges of clan life in the economy, culture and day-by-day affairs of the people.

The Communist Party implemented social measures circumspectly and with foresight, taking into account the concrete conditions in the national border areas.

While elaborating Lenin's cooperative plan and specifying the forms of the collective-farm movement, the 16th Congress of the CPSU issued the following instructions: "The form of the collective farm must correspond to the economic peculiarities in the *district* and branch of economy. In the beginning, the *mass* organisation of *associations for the common cultivation of land*, as a transitional form to artels, in some *non-grain* districts and in the eastern border areas can run parallel with the organisation of artels."<sup>1</sup>

This directive concerned in full measure the districts of the Soviet North where the SPAs—equivalents of the associations for the common cultivation of land in the country's central regions—were the most practicable and readily comprehensible forms of collective farm for the aboriginal population.

The principal means of production—reindeer, hunting and fishing gear—were not socialised in the SPAs, they were only pooled for collective production, while the SPA members retained property rights. The SPAs were expected to raise labour productivity and the commercial value of their undertakings thus proving the advantages of collective labour over individual labour, and pointing the way to the transition to the higher forms of collective farms. Production associations were followed by associations for collective work in reindeer-breeding, hunting, fishing or other northern occupations.

Collectivisation in the Yenisei North was marred, particularly in the initial period, by serious errors, manifested in the "leftist" deviations from the Party line. Thus the Party's Central Committee drew the attention of local Party and Soviet organs to the need to take into consideration the peculiarities of the northern districts during the introduction of the socialist forms of economy. Early in 1933,

<sup>1</sup>The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions..., Vol. 4, p. 450.

when the errors and the deviations from the Party line were corrected, the people of the North began to join collective farms en masse. In five years' time, nearly 60 per cent of all households in the Yenisei North joined collective farms. In the Taimyr and Evenk areas, the SPAs accounted for approximately 99 per cent of the total number of collective farms.

Backed by the overall success of socialist construction in the North, the collective farms made a great headway in 1938-40. This can be seen from the following data (as of January 1 of the corresponding year):

| Area                                       | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Evenk                                      |      |      |      |      |
| Total number of collective farms . . . . . | 34   | 34   | 36   | 36   |
| Percentage of collectivisation             | 72.0 | 95.0 | 96.5 | 98.5 |
| Taimyr                                     |      |      |      |      |
| Total number of collective farms . . . . . | 52   | 46   | 41   | 41   |
| Percentage of collectivisation             | 63.7 | 82.6 | 92.6 | 97.2 |

Thus in 1940 collectivisation had won a complete victory in the Yenisei North.

Gradually, as the SPAs gathered organisational, economic and numerical strength they adopted the Rules of Agricultural Artels. In the Taimyr area, the first four SPAs adopted the Rules in 1938; the next year they were followed by 25 of the remaining 46 SPAs. They united 882 out of a total of 1,424 households. In the Evenk area, the first SPAs were reorganised into agricultural artels in 1939.

For the people of the North collectivisation was the principal and decisive means for achieving socialist production relations. They scored this victory in the initial stages of the industrial development of the North. The basic preliminary to this victory was the industrialisation of the whole country, as a result of which it was transformed



from a backward, agrarian country into a highly developed industrial power.

The collective-farm system radically changed the economic basis of the peoples of the North. The socialist economic system and socialist ownership of the means of production replaced the natural, patriarchal mode of production. The triumph of the collective-farm system was decisive in the consolidation of the socialist mode of production.

A fundamental indicator of economic power among the peoples of the North was the ownership of reindeer. Reindeer formed the basis of economy; the northerners even had a saying: "He who owns reindeer owns the tundra".

In spite of the persistence of patriarchal traditions, class differentiation among reindeer-breeders was manifest.

The following table illustrates the changes in the balance of the various social groups of reindeer-breeders in the Evenk National Area (calculated in terms of ownership in % of total head of reindeer):

|   | 1935  | 1936  | 1937  | 1938  | 1939  | 1940  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Collective-farm herds . . .                             | 1.4   | 3.5   | 5.1   | 41.5  | 45.0  | 47.0  |
| State-farm herds . . . . .                              | —     | 7.3   | 8.0   | 8.3   | 8.5   | 8.0   |
| Herds as personal property<br>of collective farmers . . | 46.0  | 44.4  | 54.0  | 48.3  | 46.2  | 45.0  |
| Individual peasants . . . .                             | 23.7  | 19.2  | 19.5  | 1.9   | 0.3   | —     |
| Kulaks . . . . .  | 28.9  | 25.5  | 13.4  | 0.003 | —     | —     |
|   | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The organisation of the reindeer industry was one of the most complicated questions in the North. At the initial stage of collectivisation most of the reindeer were privately owned by members of SPAs, but as soon as the collective farms became organisationally and economically stronger, the need for the private ownership of large herds gradually disappeared. Collective ownership of most of the reindeer eliminated the economic basis for exploitation and provided

conditions for collective and free work on an equal basis by all members of society.

A similar process was taking place in the fur industry—one of the most vital and profitable industries in the North. As a result of the collectivisation, the socialist sector (collective farms, state farms and production-hunting stations) gained a dominant position in the procurement of furs.

This can be seen from the following table which illustrates the percentage of furs produced by the various social groups in the Evenk area:

|                             | 1935  | 1936  | 1937  | 1938  | 1939  | 1940  |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Collective farms . . . . .  | 39.7  | 51.0  | 55.0  | 57.0  | 84.0  | 88.5  |
| Production-hunting stations | 23.7  | 22.3  | 22.0  | 30.0  | 14.0  | 10.0  |
| Individual trappers . . . . | 31.6  | 25.7  | 23.0  | 13.0  | 2.0   | 1.5   |
| Kulaks . . . . .            | 5.0   | 1.0   | —     | —     | —     | —     |
|                             | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

In 1935 the socialist sector accounted for 63.4 per cent of the total output of furs in Evenkia; in 1940 its share rose to 98.5 per cent. The output of furs by the collective farms increased from 39.7 per cent to 88.5 per cent. Thus the socialist sector became the principal supplier of furs.

At that time, the fur industry was the main source of income for the collective farms in the North; in 1939 the collective farms derived 66.8 per cent of their incomes from the marketing of furs.

It is clear, then, that by 1940 the socialist sector had acquired a dominating position in all branches of the economy, that the socialist method of production had triumphed and that the peoples of the North had taken the road to socialism. It was a logical sequence to the Leninist nationalities policy implemented by the Communist Party.

Gradually, as the socialist mode of production spread among the peoples of the North, the archaic forms and peculiarities marking the social-economic relations disap-



peared; the peoples of the North began to stand on an equal footing with all the other peoples in the Soviet Union.

The collective-farm system ensured the toilers of the North a continual growth in their material well-being and cultural standards. In the period from 1935 to 1940, the non-distributable funds of collective farms in Evenkia increased from 41,000 to 1,548,000 rubles, and gross income, from 895,300 to 5,000,000 rubles. Income per collective-farm household increased from 1,616 to 4,500 rubles. The reindeer population in collective farms increased from 3,500 to 47,000 head.<sup>1</sup>

In 1940 the fixed assets of collective farms in Taimyr were valued at 3.5 million rubles, cash income—at 4.9 million rubles, and the income per household—at 3,198 rubles.

The collective-farm system contributed to the subsequent development of the traditional branches of northern economy—reindeer-breeding, hunting, fishing, and also to the development of new branches—land cultivation, dairy farming, animal-breeding. This brought about a qualitative change in the mode of life and the production activities of the peoples of the North.

The triumph of the collective-farm system also signified a victory over the local exploiters—rich men, clan chiefs and shamans. It eradicated the social roots of enmity and mistrust between the clans and tribes; it established genuine friendship and cooperation between the various nationalities in their common struggle for socialism.

Gradually, a new class—the collective-farm peasantry that included all the toilers in the North—emerged. In the social structure of the peoples of the North, the collective-farm peasantry occupied a leading position because there was virtually no national working class—it was only in the making. The collective farmers became conscious and active builders of socialism as a result of the impressive educational work conducted by the Communist Party.

The transition of the majority of the peoples of the North from a nomadic to a settled way of life was the most important result of the victory of the collective-farm system. The misery and poverty of the masses were gone for

<sup>1</sup> SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 2, l. 125.

ever, living standards went up unbelievably. Social and economic conditions were reorganised on the basis of socialist relations. The pattern of everyday life also underwent a change.

Thus collectivisation was the decisive instrument in the liquidation of the political, economic and cultural backwardness of the northern peoples; it raised them to the level shared by all the peoples of the Soviet Union. That, precisely, is the significance of Lenin's cooperative plan and its implementation in the lives of the peoples of the North.

The industrialisation of the country's northern border areas was also of tremendous and growing importance.

We have already noted that the Norilsk deposits of coal, copper and nickel were the first to be explored. When they were discovered in 1919, some geologists claimed that the deposits had virtually no industrial value, since they were situated in remote and inaccessible areas.

In 1924 the question was examined by the Presidium of the All-Russia Council of People's Economy. The Presidium's chairman, F. E. Dzerzhinsky, did not accept the arguments for stopping field work, and insisted on pressing forward. In 1925 a large geological-prospecting party was sent to the site of the future town of Norilsk.

In the period from 1925 to 1927 the expedition fully confirmed the presence of rich copper and nickel ores in the Norilsk deposits.

Ten years later, in 1935, the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of People's Commissars passed a resolution concerning the construction of what was to be the Norilsk Nickel Factory.

This marked the beginning of a heroic effort to build a major enterprise in the frigid polar area.

Much credit for the industrialisation of the Yenisei North and the creation of the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Plant should be attributed to A. P. Zavenyagin, one of the prominent planners of the socialist industry, who was the head of the construction project and later the plant's first director.

The first 75 tons of non-ferrous metals were produced by March 10, 1939, on the eve of the 18th Congress of the CPSU.



At the end of 1939 Norilsk was given the status of a workers' settlement.

Igarka, a port some 673 kilometres off the mouth of the Yenisei, became another major economic centre in the Yenisei North. Construction was started in 1929, and a year later the first saw-mill was put into operation. During the Second Five-Year Plan the factories in Igarka were modernised and output of saw timber was increased.

In 1935 the town had a population of 12,000 and in 1939—20,000.

In the beginning of 1935 a delegation from Igarka was sent to Moscow where it was received by M. I. Kalinin. The Government of the RSFSR adopted a decision on the economic and cultural work of the Igarka Town Soviet and noted that "in the severe conditions of the Far North, a new industrial and cultural centre has been created in a short period of time; this centre mobilises the entire population of the Yenisei North for the construction of socialism".

The building of Igarka is one of the brightest pages in the history of the Soviet North.

The development of the graphite deposits in Noginsk was intensified and surveys of natural resources in Evenk and Taimyr areas continued. Local industries were expanded.

The Principal Directorate for the Northern Sea Route (Glavsevmorput), which was inaugurated in 1932 under the USSR Council of People's Commissars, played an important role in developing the transport system in the North. It was entrusted with the following tasks: "...the starting of navigation along the Northern Sea Route from the Sea of Barents to the Bering Strait; the organisation of marine, river, air and radio communications and scientific research work in the Soviet Arctic; the development of productive forces and natural resources in the Far North; assistance in the economic and cultural growth of the aborigines in the Far North and their mobilisation for active work in socialist construction." Subsequently, more difficult and complicated tasks were added.

Glavsevmorput was placed in charge of the whole Soviet territory north of 62°N.

Much credit for the organisation of smooth work by the

Department should be given to its chief, Otto Schmidt, a veteran Communist and a prominent Soviet scientist who explored nearly the whole of the Soviet North.

The numerous activities of the Glavsevmorput were closely linked with the general economic and cultural development of the aborigines. Academician Otto Schmidt wrote: "The ethnic groups of the North, who were dying out under tsarism, have changed beyond recognition. They now have their own written languages and national organisation. Backed by great economic and cultural assistance, they are rapidly developing their talents; not only in formal legal terms, but also in terms of everyday life patterns, they are becoming equal members of the great family of Soviet peoples."<sup>1</sup>

When the Soviet people celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1937, the North had 500 schools with 17,000 pupils; 29 schools and 7 boarding schools were under construction. There were 323 medical and children's institutions. The Institute for the Peoples of the North was actively training national cadres. Decisive successes were registered in the collectivisation of such occupations as hunting, fishing and reindeer-breeding, in the land-management scheme, in the development of co-operative trade, etc.

Thanks to the Communist Party's persistent efforts a new type of Soviet citizen—an active participant in the building of socialism—was born in the North. In 1937 enterprises and organisations of Glavsevmorput had 1,513 northerners on their staffs.

The Northern Sea Route helped to step up navigation on the Yenisei, the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, and other rivers. The opening of the South Taimyr water route was a major accomplishment.

The delivery of foodstuffs and commodities to the Avam and Khatanga districts via Dudinka had required many reindeer and a substantial output of labour. In 1932, for instance, nearly 70 per cent of the male population in those districts were occupied in the haulage of goods.

<sup>1</sup> O.Y. Schmidt, *Sever k dvadtsatiletiyu Oktyabrskoi revolyutsii* (The North on the Eve of the 20th Anniversary of the October Revolution), *Sovetskaya Arktika*, 1937, No. 11, p. 11.



In 1933 the South Taimyr expedition was instructed to establish the feasibility of navigation in that area. The expedition covered nearly 4,000 kilometres (from Krasnoyarsk to the Kara Sea and the Pyasina), of which 1,500 were unexplored; 13 self-propelled vessels and 22 tow-boats delivered 3,854 tons of food and manufactured goods to the place of destination.

The development of transport in the Khatanga basin was also an important economic feat. In the course of 1934-35 the Pyasina-Khatanga expedition explored the feasibility of delivering goods to Khatanga via the Northern Sea Route.

Another expedition explored the lower reaches of the Khatanga and the Khatanga Bay; it found that the entire basin was suitable for transport. By 1940 more than 1,000 kilometres have been established as navigable.

From 1952 sea vessels began to travel along the Khatanga regularly. Today there is a sea port in Khatanga, all food-stuffs and commodities are delivered exclusively by sea to the Khatanga district in the Taimyr National Area.

Navigation in the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska, the Khatanga, the Pyasina and the Yenisei was of exceptional importance for the peoples of the Yenisei North. Since the revolution river transport on the Yenisei has been virtually built anew.

Air transport played an important role in the development of the productive forces in the Yenisei North. In the first years of Soviet power, when there was no air transport, it took more than 20 days to cover the distance on horseback from Krasnoyarsk to Turukhansk.

It was necessary to give priority to aviation in the North because the region had long been isolated from industrial and cultural centres, as a result of which the development of its productive forces had been retarded. The Far North, moreover, covers a vast territory with no railways and few water routes, the navigable season of which is very limited—only four months in the lower reaches of the Yenisei.

The first airplane, the Mossovet, left Krasnoyarsk for Turukhansk on March 4, 1926. It covered the distance from Krasnoyarsk to Yeniseisk in only 2 hours. The landing site in Yeniseisk was in poor repair, and the airplane broke a ski. A few days later it left for the Podkamennaya Tungus-

ka, and reached Turukhansk only on March 20. Originally, it was planned that the airplane would fly to Dudinka, but a blizzard prevented the flight. The flight marked the beginning of air communications in the Yenisei North.

In September 1929 the outstanding polar aviator, B. G. Chukhnovsky, flew to Turukhansk.

There is a saying that aviation lends wings to the North. It was also a factor in the cultural revolution for the peoples of the North. It undermined their traditional concepts of the world and the universe and engendered a new outlook. In August 1931 the Komseverput-2 airplane under the command of Y. S. Lipp<sup>1</sup> flew to fight an epizootic among reindeer in the vicinity of the Bolshaya Kheta. There were no maps of the district in those days, and so Y. S. Lipp asked P. Komarov, a Tungus, to fly with him as a guide. Here is M. Zinger's story of the flight: "Komarov took a piece of paper and pencil and began to make a sketch of the tributaries of the Yenisei over which the plane had to fly. A few minutes later, he gave to the flight observer a map of the branches of these tributaries. The man pointed out the places where *chooms* stood and named their owners. Suddenly he cried out: 'Look! That's the *choom* of our big shaman!' Then he added: 'The shaman is looking up and thinking that this is a god flying, but it is no god, it is Proshka Komarov!'" M. Zinger adds: "The map that the talented Tungus drew was so precise that it served as an excellent guide over the vast and monotonously green taiga."<sup>2</sup>

At first, hydroplanes were used in the North because there were no landing strips. By 1931 the air lines in the North covered 4,454 kilometres; in 1932—12,575 kilometres 80.5 per cent of which were serviced by hydroplanes.

The 1,600-kilometre long Krasnoyarsk-Dudinka air route with non-scheduled flights was opened in 1932; in

<sup>1</sup> Yan Lipp played an outstanding role in the development of air routes in the Yenisei North. He was the first to open the Krasnoyarsk-Yeniseisk-Turukhansk-Igarka-Dudinka, Turukhansk-Tura, and the Podkamennaya Tunguska-Baikit air routes. In recognition of his services to aviation, Y. S. Lipp was awarded the Order of Lenin.

<sup>2</sup> M. Zinger, *Pobezhdenniye morya. Ocherk Karsskikh ekspeditsii* (The Conquered Seas. A Story of Kara Expeditions), Moscow, 1932, pp. 84-85.



1934-35 it was followed by the Dudinka-Novy Port, Dudinka-Avam-Khatanga, and Turukhansk-Tura airlines serviced by hydroplanes. Later planes began to fly along the Podkamennaya Tunguska-Baikit route. Thus Tura, the centre of the Evenk area, and Baikit, the district centre, were linked with the main Krasnoyarsk-Turukhansk-Dudinka airline.

Great credit for the development of aviation in the Yenisei North belongs to V. L. Galyshev, B. G. Chukhnovsky, Y. S. Lipp, M. T. Slepnev and M. S. Molokov—all veterans of Soviet aviation.

The creation of air transport was an outstanding feat by the Soviet people in the development of the Soviet North.

### 3. Successes of the Cultural Revolution

The cultural revolution occupied a prominent place in the activities of the Communist Party. Special attention was given to such formerly backward regions as the North. In the first years of Soviet power Lenin said that the elimination of illiteracy was one of the Party's key tasks in raising the people's general culture, because "an illiterate person stands outside politics".<sup>1</sup>

The task of eliminating illiteracy was allotted to cultural centres, reading-huts and "red chooms"; when the peoples were occupied for lengthy periods hunting or reindeer-grazing, the cultural workers went together with them and taught the adults individually.

The so-called cultural marches played an important role in eliminating illiteracy. The first of them was made to the Far North in 1932. Many of the natives learned to read and write as a consequence.

N. K. Krupskaya, Deputy People's Commissar for Education, devoted much energy to the elimination of illiteracy among the peoples of the North. In April 1937 she called a

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 78.

special conference on this question. At that time there were 34,400 illiterates in the North, but only 9,400 (31 per cent) of them attended classes. In the Taimyr National Area there were 2,400 illiterates, but only 366 were engaged in studies; in the Evenk National Area only 791 out of a total of 3,400 illiterates were studying.

The plans drawn up by the conference quickened the eradication of illiteracy. In the Evenk National Area the number of people who were studying in 1940 increased to 1,890. Special educational stations and three schools for adults had a total of 200 pupils; many libraries were opened and film projectors installed.

The introduction of universal primary education in the national languages was a very important event. The main difficulty lay in the fact that culturally the peoples of the North were lagging behind the advanced nations. At that time illiteracy rates among the northern peoples fluctuated between 0.8 and 19 per cent; the percentage of children who attended schools fluctuated between 9 and 69.

Most of the schools were coeducational. There was a shortage of teachers familiar with native tongues, the mode of life and the psychology of the population. There were no textbooks complying both with the scientific standards and the specific features of the national schools.

In the school-year 1931/32 there were 16 schools, including 11 boarding schools, in the Taimyr and Evenk national areas; in the next school-year, the number increased to 32, of which 21 were boarding schools. The number of pupils rose from 351 to 1,222; the number of pupils from the native population increased from 117 to 384. The number of teachers in the two areas increased from 19 to 102, while allocations for education rose from 323,000 to 1,479,000 rubles.<sup>1</sup>

The boarding school continued to predominate. Lessons were given in the native tongues; the term of education was five years—the time required for an equivalent of the four-year education in Russian primary schools.

The extension of the school network and the introduction of compulsory education antagonised the local rich and sha-

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 8, reg. 4, f. 2, l. 42-44; fd. 35, reg. 3, f. 2, l. 56; reg. 4, f. 36, l. 29; reg. 5, f. 46, l. 68, 74.



mans, they agitated against schools, arguing that the poor had no need for education.

From agitation, the rich and shamans frequently went over to direct subversion. A former priest, together with the rich and shamans, set fire to a school in Baikit in 1936; 26 Evenk children perished in the flames. In the same year a boarding school was burnt in Strelka-on-Chuna.

Having recognised the importance of education and crushed the resistance of the rich and shamans, the toiling masses of the North confidently took the road of cultural development and of struggle against illiteracy and ignorance. The introduction of universal primary education stepped up the cultural revolution and the extension of the school network. The number of schoolchildren in the Evenk National Area increased from 54 per cent in 1934 to 98.6 per cent in 1940; in the Taimyr National Area, their number reached 92.2 per cent.

Thus the introduction of universal primary education in the North was nearly complete by 1940; the next stage was the introduction of seven-year education. This could have never happened in any capitalist country where the national minorities and the small nations suffer from ruthless colonial exploitation and racial discrimination.

The Soviet state spent huge sums on education in the Yenisei North. The allocations per schoolchild in Krasnoyarsk Territory amounted only to 51.3 rubles in 1938, compared with 219 rubles in the Evenk National Area.

Such concerted attention to the needs of the ethnic groups can be given only in socialist countries with their unprecedented upsurge of living and cultural standards for all members of society.

The creation of written languages for the peoples of the North was an outstanding cultural accomplishment. Written languages with a Latin alphabet were created for Evenks, Khanty, Chukchi, Mansi, Nentsi, and other northern peoples in 1932. The greatest mistake consisted in the ensuing artificial isolation from the Russian language, because the vocabularies of the northern peoples had been constantly enriched by Russian words for many a century.

Before the October Revolution, Lenin pointed out that it was necessary for all inhabitants of Russia to be given a free

choice to learn Russian. "We do not think," he indicated, "that the great and mighty Russian language needs anyone having to study it by *sheer compulsion*."<sup>1</sup>

The change-over to the Cyrillic alphabet played a great progressive role. The influence of Russian on the languages of the northern peoples became particularly marked during the Soviet epoch; it was the result of the great assistance which the Russian people accorded in reorganising their economy and culture along socialist lines. Besides forming new terms on the basis of their own languages, the northern peoples are widely assimilating Russian words. The vocabularies of the peoples of the North have long adopted Russian words designating "the state", "state farm", "government", "collective farm", "Soviet", "the Party", etc. They have also assimilated through the Russian many international words.

However, mistakes were made in developing the written northern languages. Quite often, Russian words, which had long been adopted by the vocabularies, were replaced by artificial word-building.

The creation of the northern written languages was followed by the publication of textbooks, books on politics, etc. In 1937 the Leningrad department of the RSFSR People's Education Commissariat's publishing house printed 25 textbooks in 64,500 copies in the northern languages—Evenk, Even, Nanai, Chukchi, Koryak, Khanty, Selkup and Mansi.

Attention was focussed on the translation of the most important political sources, such as the constitutions of the USSR and the RSFSR, and also the reports delivered by J. V. Stalin and M. I. Kalinin on the drafts of the constitutions of the USSR and the RSFSR.

The author of this book and the other scholars of the Institute of the Northern Peoples took part in translating the Constitution of the USSR into Evenk.

Lenin's works and the most important documents of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government were translated at a later date.

The cultural upsurge of the northern peoples was demonstrated by the appearance and development of their national literatures—the youngest of the multinational literatures

<sup>1</sup>V. I. Lenin. *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 72.



in the USSR. This was connected with the successes of cultural and economic construction in the North and the growth of the national intelligentsia.

The most conspicuous Evenk literary work of that period was the novel *Red Suglan*, by Nikita Sakharov, about the organisation of collective farms in the North. In the 1930s, A. Salatkin-Lontogir, one of the pioneers of Evenk poetry, wrote the first epic poem *Tegdallukon and Ulkerikken* devoted to the love of a young man and woman and their struggle against their enemies.

The local writers concentrate most of their attention on the thoughts and deeds of the peoples who were offered a new life by Soviet power. They are glorifying the Communist Party, the Soviet power and great Lenin—the teacher and liberator of the northern peoples.

The Evenk writer Pyotr Savin aptly said that his people had been given a second lease of life in Soviet times.

The Russian proletariat under Lenin's leadership has brought light to the North. No force in the world can swerve the peoples of the North from the road to communism.

Russian classical literature and the best works of Soviet literature have greatly influenced the development of literature of the peoples of the North. The young writers learned from Russian writers and poets and translated into their own languages the classical works of Russian and Soviet literature. The first to be translated were books by Pushkin, Tolstoi, Gorky, Sholokhov, Fadeyev and Tikhonov.

The North as a subject began to occupy a more conspicuous place in the works of Russian writers. The beginning was made by Maxim Gorky. In a letter to the editor of the *Budushchaya Sibir* (Siberia of the Future) magazine, he warmly supported the plan to report on the life of the various tribes in Siberia who were "deaf and blind" before the October Revolution. Maxim Gorky insisted that these peoples should learn that a new world was in the making, a world "that required their active participation".<sup>1</sup>

The life of the peoples of the North before the revolution was skilfully and accurately depicted by V. Y. Shishkov in his *Ugryum River* and other stories about Evenks.

<sup>1</sup> Maxim Gorky, *Collected Works* in 30 volumes, Vol. 25, Moscow, 1953, p. 247 (in Russian).

The Siberian author I. G. Goldberg devoted many of his works to the life of Evenks in the upper reaches of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska where he himself had lived in exile before the October Revolution. Back in 1914 he published the *Stories from the Tunguska* in which he drew a gloomy picture of the difficult life of the Tungus (Evenks), but, in the same stories he told of their courage and fortitude in the struggle against the severe natural conditions, and of their superb knowledge of the taiga.

I. G. Goldberg continued to write about the Evenks after the October Revolution. He devoted to them the books *How Yukhortsa Took the New Trail* and *The Big Nulga of Barkaul* (1932), *Novels and Stories* (1934), and *Simple Life* (1936). I. G. Goldberg is established in Soviet literature as an outstanding expert on and writer of Evenk life.

Maxim Gorky heartily supported his ambition of writing an epic about the life of Evenks<sup>1</sup>.

The 1930s marked the active period of another Siberian writer—M. I. Osharov. His book *The Big Argish* (Irkutsk, 1934) about the life of Evenks on the Podkamennaya Tunguska became very popular.

Later, Mikhail Osharov wrote many stories for the central and Siberian press. He also collected and published stories and legends of the peoples of the Yenisei North. *Achiga, The Hard Happiness* and *Where the Kemchu Flows* are rated as some of his best stories.

M. Osharov began to collect Evenk folklore under the influence of I. M. Suslov. Maxim Gorky thought highly of Osharov's *Stories of the North*.

The Yenisei North was visited by B. L. Gorbatov, a prominent Soviet author. His book *The Arctic As It Is* is an important contribution to the literature about the North and its courageous peoples.<sup>2</sup>

Ignaty Rozhdestvensky, a teacher of the Russian language and literature at the Igarka secondary school, produced his first literary works, devoted to the Yenisei North and its peoples, in the 1930s-40s. At about the same time Kazimir Lisovsky, a Siberian poet, produced his first works.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 29, p. 296; Vol. 30, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Boris Gorbatov, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1955 (in Russian).



The appearance of books by Soviet writers about the new life of the northern peoples and the socialist reorganisation of their economy and culture was an unprecedented event, possible only in the Soviet country born of the October Revolution.

The Soviet government respects the cultural heritage of all peoples and it disseminates their cultural accomplishments throughout the country. This is borne out by the publication in Russian of northern folklore and novels by northern writers. Many books by Evenk writers and poets in separate editions were published in 1937-40. The literary anthology *Uchale-Tikin* (Today and Yesterday) of works by young writers was published in 1938; collections of works by the Evenk poet G. Chinkov appeared in 1938-39.

Books by A. Salatkin, A. Platonov and others came out in separate editions. A collection of works by young authors *The Poesy of the North*—appeared in Leningrad in 1939.

The Evenks, like the other peoples of the Soviet North, have a rich folklore. The Evenks, who inhabit the vast territory of Siberia and the Far East, have in the course of many centuries created numerous epics, legends and lyrical songs. It is precisely folklore that corroborates the hypothesis that Evenks are aborigines of Siberia and that the lands around Lake Baikal belonged to them from ancient times. It was from there that the Evenk tribes moved to the Amur, down the Lena, the Yenisei and its tributaries the Nizhnyaya Tunguska and the Podkamennaya Tunguska.

Stories about animals, wizards, epic and heroic legends, stories about life, both the old and the new, are particularly widespread. Legends—heroic, toponymic, cosmogonic, and also about everyday life, historic personages and events—are very interesting. There was a time when scholars held the view that the Evenks had no permanent verse to accompany their songs. This view was repudiated by recent data collected by Soviet scholars of the North, particularly by Professor Voskoboinikov.

Evenk folklore is widely known to the Soviet reader. It is informative and provides interesting material for the historian, ethnographer and linguist. It is a source of inspiration for all northern writers drawn on.

The cultural revolution in the Yenisei North enlarged the network of "red chooms", reading-huts, libraries, clubs and film projectors. In 1930 there were only two cultural and educational establishments in the Evenk National Area, compared with 21 in 1940. In 1939 there were 6 libraries (none in 1930) with a total of 19,300 books.

The same was happening in the Taimyr area. The total number of cultural and educational establishments there increased from 20 in 1935 to 38 in 1940.<sup>1</sup>

The settled way of life changed the character of cultural establishments, the "red chooms" gave way to Houses of Culture, village clubs and libraries. Cinema and radio became a feature of life in the North.

One of the most important tasks was to improve the health of the indigenous population. Health protection was advanced. The number of medical institutions in the Evenk National Area increased from 6 in 1934 to 30 in 1940, and the number of doctors, and medical workers, from 6 to 59. In 1940 the hospitals registered 510 child-births, compared with only 27 in 1932. The total number of patients treated in hospitals and clinics increased by seven times within ten years.

Medical services in the Taimyr area were also making rapid progress.

Typhoid fever and small-pox were eradicated long before the war.

The training of the national intelligentsia, which simply did not exist before the October Revolution, was another major accomplishment of the cultural revolution.

In the beginning, the national cadres were trained mostly at short-term courses. In 1932, for instance, the Leningrad Institute of Soviet Administration organised a special group of 20 representatives of the peoples of the North. They were trained for executive posts in the national areas. Four-month courses for chairmen and secretaries of nomad Soviets, chairmen and team leaders for collective farms, and executives for integrated cooperatives were arranged in Evenk and Taimyr areas in 1933. These courses were atten-

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 7, f. 2, l. 6; fd. 35, reg. 15, f. 1, l. 4; reg. 5, f. 9, l. 34; SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 2, l. 88.



ded by 105 people, and another 50 people attended the training courses for administrative personnel for collective farms (chairmen, team leaders, accountants).

In 1936 the Institute for the Peoples of the North opened a one-year course in law.

All these measures were made necessary by the need for a speedy preparation of local cadres. The decisive role, however, was played by higher and special secondary schools. The leading role in this respect belonged to the Institute for the Peoples of the North in Leningrad opened in 1930 on the basis of the Northern Department of the Institute of Oriental Studies. The institute had a four-year sector (special secondary school) for training Soviet, Party, cooperative, collective-farm and educational personnel, and a three-year department for training advanced specialists and post-graduate students. The state provided for all the needs of the students.

Nearly all administrative personnel in the North had graduated from this institute. In 1936 the institute presented certificates to 46 students of 16 nationalities, including 17 Party and Soviet executives, 13 education workers, and 16 economists.

In the following year, the institute released 26 graduates, men and women, of 13 nationalities.

Hundreds of young men and women from the North received their general and political education in schools and institutes of Leningrad, that leading centre of Russian science and culture. Many of them joined, while in Leningrad, the Communist Party or the Young Communist League.

Educational establishments were also opened in the North. Teachers' training schools were opened in Naryn-Mar, Salekhard, Ostyak-Vogulsk, Nikolayevsk-on-Amur, Nagayev and Taghil; departments for the peoples of the North were opened at the Murmansk, Naryn, Yeniseisk and Yakutsk pedagogical schools. Before the war, more than 1,200 students from the North attended various educational establishments all over the country. They replenished the national cadres in Taimyr and Evenk areas and in the Khatanga and Turukhansk districts. In 1940, for instance, 126 natives held executive posts in Taimyr, and 131—in Evenk area.

The distinctive feature of the national intelligentsia in the North is that it appeared in Soviet times, absorbed the immortal ideas of Marxism-Leninism and was educated on principles of socialist internationalism, friendship and fraternity of the Soviet peoples. It was called upon to solve the problem of creating the culture, national in form and socialist in content, for as yet primitive peoples.

These peoples had to absorb the cultural achievements of the advanced nations and at the same time to retain all that was progressive in their own culture, ensuring its further development along socialist lines. It is the most stable and progressive elements in the culture of advanced peoples that are usually assimilated. The broad assimilation of the cultural accomplishments of the Russian and other peoples in the USSR enabled the peoples of the North to discover a new spiritual world, to re-evaluate their natural surrounding, social phenomena and attain a better understanding of themselves. It is not a simple assimilation, but a creative absorption of the elements of the culture of fraternal peoples which are becoming integral components of the culture of the peoples of the North. This process embraced all aspects of the material life and culture of the peoples of the North.

Thanks to the creation of industry, the development of transport and communications, implementation of Lenin's co-operative plan and the cultural revolution, the peoples of the North entered the era of socialism; becoming equal members of socialist society.

Naturally, not all the problems of building socialism were completely solved. They had too little time for solving the complicated problems, which took the advanced nations many centuries to cope with. But they achieved the main goal—built a strong foundation of socialism. As Lenin said, the peoples of the North, together with all the other fraternal peoples in the USSR, generously assisted by the Soviet state, "were completing the incomplete" and moving in the direction of completing the construction of socialism.



## 4

Chapter  
1. Nationwide  
Assistance  
to the Front

### The Yenisei North During the Great Patriotic War. The Completion of Socialist Construction

On June 22, 1941, the armies of nazi Germany violated the non-aggression pact and treacherously invaded the Soviet Union without any declaration of war. The war radically changed life in the USSR.

The Great Patriotic War was fought in common by all nationalities, big or small, inhabiting the country.

It was the first war in which the peoples of the North participated directly. Both at the front and in the rear they proved themselves selfless and redoubtable.

Urgent meetings were held in all area and district centres, in all settlements and trading posts. The people pledged allegiance to the Communist Party and the Soviet Government.

In Tura, the area centre, the people attending one such meeting adopted the following resolution: "We believe in the great cause of the Communist Party, it is our own cause. We regard ourselves as mobilised for the Great Patriotic War against nazi Germany."

Here are some of the reports which came in at the outbreak of the war.

Tembenchi. "All men, Evenks and Russians, aged between 18 and 80, ask to regard them as volunteers. . . . We prefer to die than to work for the invaders or live under the nazis."

The Krasnaya Zvezda collective farm (Strelka-on-Chuna). "We are all ready to fight with arms in hand for our country."

Khatanga. "We will give all our energy and life, if need be, for our Motherland. A. Yasinsky, Pyotr Neobutov, A. D. Patskevich and others."<sup>1</sup>

Communists and Komsomol members were the first to volunteer for the Soviet Army. In Baikit, 67 patriots, of whom 25 were Communists and 27 Komsomol members, volunteered in the first days of the war. Those who remained, pledged to redouble their work efforts.

During the war, the Party organisations and the Soviets, which had been elected in December 1939, continued to function. Their tasks were growing in number and difficulty.

One difficulty lay in the fact that many Communists and deputies to the local Soviets left for the front. For example, 132 out of 297 deputies to the Soviets in the Evenk National Area, 34 out of 75 deputies to the district Soviets, and 73 out of 177 deputies to the village Soviets were mobilised.<sup>2</sup>

But even in war conditions, the local Soviets resolved all problems in accordance with democratic principles—during sessions of Soviets and their executive committees or in standing committees. This was a manifestation of the strength of Soviet democracy. Guided by Party organisations, the Soviets mobilised the energy of the masses for assisting the front and solving the economic problems.

The Soviet North continued to be the main supplier of furs. During the war, the Evenk National Area produced 18.5 million rubles' worth of furs; the Taimyr National Area 12.3 million rubles' worth. The delivery of furs from the North in 1945 exceeded the 1940 level by more than 50 per cent.

Though many hunters were at the front, those who remained overfulfilled the state plans for fur procurements.

This was largely due to the efforts of women. Many of them—Lidya Dorofeyeva, Marfa Kuvachenok, Lidya Gayulskaya, Ulyana Kocheni and Maria Barkhatova, to mention only a few—became excellent hunters and trappers.

<sup>2</sup> SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 2, l. 234.

<sup>1</sup> *Evenkiiskaya novaya zhizn*, June 24, July 15, 18, 1941; *Sovietskyy Taimyr*, June 27, 1941.



Reindeer-breeding provided the population with the essential foodstuffs. Notable changes were occurring in this industry.

The following table illustrates the sector-by-sector distribution of reindeer in the Taimyr National Area.

| Sector                                  | 1940   |       | 1945   |       |
|---|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|   | Total  | %     | Total  | %     |
| Collective farms . . .                  | 26,363 | 33.6  | 43,824 | 59.2  |
| Personal property of collective farmers | 43,650 | 55.7  | 21,588 | 29.2  |
| State organisations                     | 296    | 0.4   | 2,394  | 3.2   |
| State farms . . . . .                   | 2,830  | 3.6   | 4,889  | 6.6   |
| Individual breeders                     | 5,987  | 6.7   | 1,365  | 1.8   |
|   | 79,126 | 100.0 | 74,060 | 100.0 |

Thus during the five years, the number of reindeer in collective farms increased from 33.6 to 59.2 per cent, and the number of reindeer in the socialist sector as a whole (collective farms, state organisations and state farms) increased from 36.6 to 69 per cent. This was mostly due to the socialisation of reindeer owned by the members of the simplest production associations in connection with their reorganisation into agricultural artels.

The number of reindeer owned individually by collective farmers decreased from 55.7 to 29.2 per cent. Individual reindeer-breeders accounted for only 1.8 per cent of the total number of reindeer in 1945.

So the socialist sector took the upper hand in reindeer-breeding, marking the successful completion of its reorganisation along socialist lines.

Similar processes were occurring in the Evenk National Area. The number of reindeer in the collective farms there increased from 48.7 to 80.2 per cent, and the number owned individually by collective farmers decreased from 23.6 to 13

per cent.<sup>1</sup> Thus, as a result of the triumph of the collective-farm system, all reindeer in the area in 1945 were owned by the socialist sector.

The productivity and commercial value of reindeer-breeding increased slightly during the war, but on the whole the situation was very difficult. In the Taimyr National Area the reindeer population decreased from 78,300 in 1940 to 74,000 in 1945, and in the Evenk National Area, from 49,500 to 38,600.

When the war broke out, fishing became an important source of additional food, particularly so when the resources of agricultural products were reduced due to the temporary occupation of a considerable part of Soviet territory by Nazi troops.

The fishing industry developed especially rapidly in the Taimyr area. A state fishing industry was created there. A big enterprise for catching and processing white whales and seals was opened in Dikson in January 1942; in 1944 there were 21 fishing enterprises in Taimyr. These included motor fishing stations, fish canneries and factories.

Two fishing factories and a fishing station were set up in the Evenk National Area.

Fish catches trebled in Taimyr; in Evenkia, they increased nearly ten-fold. In 1945 the collective farms in Taimyr derived nearly 30 per cent of their cash incomes from fishing.

Fishermen and women of Taimyr and Evenkia worked selflessly. The fishing team of the Put Sotsializma collective farm (Khatanga district) won the Third All-Union Prize for its accomplishments in the first quarter of 1943.

The traditional reindeer-breeding, fur-trapping and fishing industries were supplemented by new fields of collective-farm production—crop and dairy farming and fur-animal breeding. Dairy farming was a new and important occupation in the Far North.

In Evenkia, sown area increased from 169.6 to 579.2 hectares, while that in collective farms increased from 46.4 to 247 hectares. The number of gardens cultivated by workers and office employees increased. The acreage under potatoes and vegetables was enlarged. These gardens served them as an additional source of food supply.

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 35, reg. 6, f. 32, l. 46.



The collective-farm system proved during the war to be a factor of tremendous political and economic importance. It passed the severe test imposed by a sanguinary war and proved its invincible force.

We have already noted that the collective-farm system achieved decisive successes in 1938-40. But it was still necessary to complete the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms, develop their economy and, on this basis, to raise the cultural and living standards of collective farmers.

During the war, the simplest production associations were, as they grew stronger, being reorganised into agricultural artels. In Evenkia, the process was completed by the beginning of 1946. In Taimyr, it was completed earlier—in 1942.

In spite of the war-time difficulties and certain errors, the collective farms made good headway.

The following table illustrates the economic headway made by collective farms in Taimyr and Evenkia during the war.

|                                   | 1940    | 1941    | 1942    | 1943    | 1944    | 1945     | 1945<br>in % to<br>1940 |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------------|
| Taimyr National Area              |         |         |         |         |         |          |                         |
| Cost of fixed assets (000 rubles) | 3,526.0 | 5,574.0 | 6,241.0 | 6,436.0 | 6,936.0 | 8,797.1  | 249.5                   |
| Total cash incomes (000 rubles)   | 4,930.2 | 6,833.6 | 6,809.2 | 8,488.3 | 9,607.4 | 11,440.9 | 232.0                   |
| Number of reindeer (000)          | 27.9    | 35.4    | 34.0    | 43.4    | 43.7    | 43.8     | 156.9                   |
| Evenk National Area               |         |         |         |         |         |          |                         |
| Cost of fixed assets (000 rubles) | 2,554.0 | 4,306.0 | 4,401.6 | 4,604.0 | 4,500.8 | 4,964.7  | 194.4                   |
| Total cash incomes (000 rubles)   | 4,987.9 | 5,211.9 | 5,867.0 | 5,736.5 | 6,667.6 | 7,922.6  | 158.9                   |
| Number of reindeer (000)          | 24.1    | 27.6    | 29.9    | 30.9    | 27.3    | 30.9     | 128.2                   |

The per household incomes in the collective farms in Taimyr increased from 2,900 to 9,600 rubles, while the pay for one workday unit went up from 16.8 to 20.4 rubles. In Evenkia, the per household incomes went up from 4,200 to 5,600 rubles; the pay for one workday unit in 1945 reached 13 rubles 6 kopecks, but in many collective farms it was much higher—17.19 rubles on Ekonda collective farm, 18 rubles on Yessei collective farm, and 17.63 rubles on Chirinda collective farm.

The progress of collective farms was also manifested in the growth of non-distributable assets. In Taimyr they increased from 4,797,100 to 10,395,500 rubles, and in Evenkia, from 1,548,500 to 7,615,000 rubles.

Higher incomes permitted the collective farms to pay more per workday. In 1945 the collective farms in Taimyr allocated 7,276,100 rubles out of the total income of 11,440,900 rubles for work payments, in Evenkia the collective farms distributed for this purpose 5,880,600 rubles out of an aggregate income of 7,922,600 rubles.<sup>1</sup>

These figures illustrate the continual growth of public wealth on collective farms in the North and their organisational and economic consolidation.

The collective-farm system brought up hundreds of outstanding people—chairmen of collective farms, team leaders, hunters, reindeer-breeders and fishermen—who added through their persistent efforts to the country's economic might and contributed to the common victory over the enemy.

During the war the Yenisei North further developed its industry. One of the most important events was the commissioning of the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Plant. The war quickened the pace of its construction because the nazis had occupied many of the country's industrial centres. So the builders and the workers were assigned the task of producing the first shipments of the urgently needed electrolytical nickel by May 1, 1942. This task was successfully carried out.

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 19, f. 21, l. 2; reg. 22, f. 1, l. 24; fd. 35, reg. 12, f. 140, l. 21.



The plant was erected in a severe polar area, far from industrial and cultural centres and even habitable areas. It was a true feat of labour.

From the start the plant fulfilled its assignments. In 1944 the employees six times won first place in the All-Union socialist emulation.

In June 1944 Guards Colonel Fokin, a hero of the Battle of Stalingrad, presented the challenge Red Banner of the State Committee for Defence. During the ceremony, he said: "The gunfire at the fronts is fed from Norilsk. Your metal spells death for the nazis on the battlefields. Today I went to your factories and saw how persistently the Soviet people are forging victory.

"With such people we fear no difficulties. With such an army as ours, we are bound to win. Comrades from the polar area, you must carry high this sacred banner which has been presented to you in recognition of your selfless labour!"

During the war, 525 workers of the Norilsk plant were awarded medals and orders for their labour feats.

By the end of the war, the plant trebled its gross output compared with 1942: the output of copper and nickel was increased by 11 times, of coal, by 8 times, and of ores, by 9 times.

The town of Norilsk was growing. In 1945 it had 32,000 inhabitants, 9 schools, a mining and metallurgical school, 2 schools for working youth, 6 children's institutions, a drama theatre, a House of Culture, 3 cinema theatres, 10 shops, 14 canteens, 3 hospitals, 2 clinics, 3 libraries, and 5 post offices.

Geologists continued their quest for new mineral deposits in Taimyr and Evenkia; in Taimyr they were looking for oil.

The Nizhnyaya Tunguska expedition in the Evenk National Area discovered and started the development of optical calcite (Iceland spar).

Local industries were also promoted. Plants which utilised local raw materials were opened in Taimyr and Evenkia. Communications and transport (river, sea and air) were developed.

The nationwide drive for the defence fund was launched during the first months of the war. The northern peoples wholeheartedly supported the campaign and donated money, state bonds and other valuables.

During the first war-time hunting season in 1941, the hunters from the Krupskaya collective farm in Avam district appealed to all hunters in Taimyr to donate to the defence fund the first polar fox they trapped. This appeal met with a warm response. By January 1, 1942, the hunters in Taimyr donated 470 polar foxes, worth 60,800 rubles, and 15 centners of fish. The donations of the first polar fox trapped during the hunting season continued to come in as long as the war lasted.

In Evenkia, the hunters donated the first 30 or 40 squirrels of each hunting season.

The *Evenkiiskaya Novaya Zhizn* reported on March 25, 1942, that the hunters of Kuyumba were donating furs and reindeer for the defence fund. Mikhail Kopkonchin donated 15 squirrels, one reindeer and state bonds to the sum of 5,000 rubles. Kakura Kopkonchin, Alexei Kureisky and others donated 15 squirrels and two reindeer each.

The workers, engineers and technicians of the Norilsk plant collected 1,300,000 rubles for a tank column and a battery of anti-aircraft guns.

Komsomol members and youth of Taimyr collected 135,000 rubles to fund the construction of the Komsomlets Taimyra airplane.

All in all, the working people of Taimyr donated 33 million rubles, and the working people of Evenkia, more than 10 million rubles to the defence fund. Such was their contribution to the country's victory over the enemies. They thus displayed the lofty socialist patriotism born of the Great October Revolution.

Though the war brought many changes in the life of the small nations in the North cultural progress did not stop for a moment, medical services were being improved, the national cadres were trained and promoted.

The school network and organisation in Taimyr and Evenkia underwent some changes during the war. Before the war there were 23 schools in the Taimyr area (18 primary, 3 seven-year and 2 secondary schools), and in 1944/45 their number increased to 38 (28 primary, 6 seven-year and 4 secondary schools). In Evenkia, the number of schools increased from 24 (18 primary, 3 seven-year and 3 secondary schools) to 32 (26 primary, 3 seven-year and 3 secondary



schools). The number of native students also increased. In Taimyr, there were 199 teachers, and in Evenkia—103.<sup>1</sup>

Many teachers demonstrated their exceptional professional skill. S. R. Ineshina, a veteran teacher in the North, a Communist, was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labour for her accomplishments in the field of education. Y. A. Prozorova, the headmistress of the Kochumdek primary school was awarded the Badge of Honour; Y. G. Lishina from the Dudinka secondary school received the Medal for Labour Valour, and N. Y. Semyonova from the Baikit secondary school received the Medal for Distinction in Labour.

Veteran teachers V. M. Lubkina, A. A. Kamaritsin and Y. S. Burmakin continued to work in Evenkia. Many Evenks—K. I. Salatkina, P. N. Demchenko, M. I. Uvachan, A. V. Afanasyeva, V. V. Venglinskaya, N. K. Kombagir and G. G. Suyevalova (both graduates from the Igarka Pedagogical School)—became teachers.

However, the schools experienced many difficulties during the war—there were few teachers, particularly in secondary schools; there were even fewer who knew the native tongues; the teaching facilities, particularly in primary schools, were inadequate; the boarding schools experienced shortages of fuel. Many children did not go to school—261 in Taimyr (1944/45) and 109 in Evenkia.<sup>2</sup>

The cultural organisations regularly carried on mass political work. The "red chooms" posted reports by the Soviet Information Bureau, bulletins and wall-newspapers; they arranged amateur concerts, reported on the fulfilment of state plans by collective farms and fishermen's artels.

The most important duty of cultural workers during the war was to provide radio broadcasting service for the inhabitants of trade posts.

In 1945 there were 5 clubs, 22 "red chooms" and 9 libraries in Taimyr, and 19 reading-cottages, 3 clubs, 4 libraries and 6 "red chooms" and a museum of local lore in Evenkia.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 31, f. 1, l. 146; SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 2, l. 127.

<sup>2</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 14, f. 3, l. 67; fd. 35, reg. 12, f. 53, l. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., fd. 28, reg. 14, f. 3, l. 66; fd. 35, reg. 12, f. 58, l. 11.

The network of medical institutions expanded. During the war, 3 hospitals, 5 dispensaries and 9 medical stations were opened in Taimyr. The number of hospital beds was increased from 102 to 297, of doctors, from 13 to 17, and of junior medical personnel, from 65 to 110.

In 1945 Evenkia had nearly 40 medical establishments compared with only 6 hospitals with dispensaries and 20 medical stations in 1940.<sup>1</sup>

It is to the great credit of the medical workers that there were no outbreaks of epidemics or infectious diseases in the North during the war.

The budgets of national areas were increasing, another indication of the Soviet government's care for the northern peoples.

The number of national cadres trained in special secondary and higher educational establishments was substantially reduced, but the national cadres continued to be trained for practical work in Party, Soviet and Komsomol organs, in collective farms, state farms, cultural and educational organisations.

More than 500 people, including 200 Evenks and Yakuts, were promoted to executive posts in the Evenk area.<sup>2</sup>

Many northern people stood at the head of collective farms and teams of hunters and reindeer-breeders. The chairmen of simple production associations and agricultural artels included M. Y. Yamkin, a Nenets, G. K. Bettu, a Dolgan, B. Porbin, a Nganasan, the Evenks I. A. Mukto, G. V. Saffronov, Y. D. Khukochar, N. P. Doonov, D. R. Chapogir and I. V. Khutopogir, and the Yakuts S. L. Beti, K. K. Wodai, Y. D. Yeldogir, I. M. Kombagir and Anisya Mukto.

During the difficult years of the war these people summoned the collective farmers to heroic efforts in the defence of the country. It was a manifestation of the great political maturity of the peoples of the North resulting from the socialist reorganisation of their life and the triumph of the socialist culture and world outlook.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., fd. 28, reg. 27, f. 49, l. 35 (including medical establishments of Noril'sk); f. 50, l. 40.

<sup>2</sup> PAKT, fd. 28, reg. 44, f. 8, l. 35; fd. 35, reg. 9, f. 1, l. 55.



## 2. The Battle Feats of the Northerners

The sons of the northern peoples went to the front with great patriotic enthusiasm.

The mobilised soldiers from Evenkia wrote the following collective letter to the working people of their area:

"Comrade Evenks! The country asks you to exert all your efforts in support of the front. Your task is to produce, as much as possible, furs, reindeer, fish and meat. You must always remember that the front and the rear are a single entity!"<sup>1</sup>

The sons of the North defended their country at the walls of Leningrad and Stalingrad, in the steppes of the Ukraine, in the forests of Byelorussia and on the Baltic and White seas; they liberated the Soviet Baltic republics and captured Berlin.

They knew that they were defending their Soviet country, and the freedom of the Taimyr tundra and Evenk taiga.

They proved to be brave soldiers. This is what G. R. Popov, a Dolgan, wrote from the frontlines: "The country's defenders—Dolgans, Nentsi and Evenks—are bravely and courageously fighting the hated enemy. We have much to defend. What would I have been before the revolution? An illiterate hunter or fisherman, roaming from place to place. The Soviet system gave me a start in life. For three years I studied at the Institute for the Peoples of the North in Leningrad. For this we have the Communist Party and the Soviet Government to thank.

"I was wounded. The wound has healed, and once again I am at the front. With my own eyes I saw Soviet people hanging from the gallows, I held in my own arms children killed by the nazi monsters, I heard with my own ears the groans of our tortured brothers. I took vengeance for the blood and tears of our people."<sup>2</sup>

In April 1942 the plenary meeting of the Evenk area Party Committee noted in its resolution: "Representatives

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 35, reg. 80, f. 3, l. 3.

<sup>2</sup> CANMMP, fd. 1, reg. 189, f. 2, l. 136.

of the Evenk and Yakut peoples went to the front with great patriotic enthusiasm to defend their socialist Motherland." In the period from September 1941 to April 1942, the Evenk area Party organisation sent to the front 60.3 per cent of its members, the Baikit district Party organisation—74.4 per cent, and the Ilimpia Party organisation—69.5 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

During the Seventh Taimyr Area Party Conference, secretary of the area Party committee A. V. Ankudinov said: "The former reindeer-breeders and hunters, metallurgists and miners, the fishermen of Taimyr courageously fought at the fronts of the Patriotic War."<sup>2</sup>

N. P. Yadne, a Nenets, fought on the Kalinin Front, liberated Warsaw and took part in the capture of Berlin. He was awarded the Order of Glory and three medals. Lapsuki Yaptune, a Nenets, fought at the Fourth Ukrainian Front, liberated Prague and took part in capturing Berlin. I. K. Stolipin, a Dolgan, defended Stalingrad and fought at the Second Ukrainian Front. L. N. Uvachan, an Evenk, fought as a partisan in the Soviet Baltic republics.

Major S.N. Kombagir, an Evenk, was awarded eight orders and medals for defending Leningrad and liberating the Soviet Baltic republics. Sniper V. N. Kaplin, an Evenk, was awarded the Order of Lenin for killing 86 nazi invaders.

The sons and daughters of all the northern peoples displayed courage and heroism at the front. The bravest of them won the title of Heroes of the Soviet Union. One of them was the Evenk Innokenty Uvachan, a signal man in the Red Army. He was born in 1919 in the village of Nakanno, Khatanga district, Irkutsk Region. There he completed a four-year course in the local primary school. Soon his family moved to the Ust-Ilimpia trading post in the Evenk National Area. There Uvachan started to work, first as a shop assistant and then as secretary to the Kislokansk village Soviet. In 1941 he became an instructor for the Executive Committee of the Evenk area Soviet, and from there he volunteered for service in the Red Army. He served in the signal company of the 276th Guards Infantry Regiment of the 92nd Guards Infantry Di-

<sup>1</sup> PAKT, fd. 35, reg. 8, f. 3, l. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, fd. 28, reg. 14, f. 3, l. 5.



vision. From October 1942 to February 1943 Uvachan fought at the Stalingrad Front, and at the end of September 1943 he was transferred to the Second Ukrainian Front where he took part in the forced crossing of the Dnieper. He was the first to establish communications across the Dnieper; after the regiment had crossed over, Uvachan maintained the communications in most difficult conditions.

Private I. P. Uvachan displayed exceptional heroism and helped his regiment to retain the captured positions.

On February 22, 1944, a decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet conferred on Guards Private I.P. Uvachan the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Thus a simple lad from the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, a descendant of the "wild Tungus", became a hero of the great land of socialism. This fact reflects the great changes which have occurred in the economy, culture, life and conscience of the northern peoples during the Soviet epoch. It is a clear illustration of the fact that the Soviet power and the Communist Party have done much to improve the lives of the people who under tsarism had been doomed to extinction.

A. V. Udigir, an Evenk and a war veteran, wrote: "I first went into action near the Russian town of Rzhev. Defending Rzhev, I was defending my native Evenkia. I fought shoulder to shoulder with Uzbeks, Russians, Georgians and Ukrainians; they, as I, all held dear the land of Rzhev. There I received my combat baptism, and from there I fought my way to the banks of the Vistula. . . .

"The Great October Revolution made the Evenk people an equal member of the multinational Soviet family. I am proud that my Motherland entrusted me, together with the soldiers of other nationalities, to defend the achievements of the October Revolution with arms in hand."<sup>1</sup>

Soviet patriotism, great love for the country and readiness to defend it are common to all Soviet people. These features also mark the national character of the northern peoples.

In the grim years of the war the northerners were helped by their elder brothers—the Russian soldiers and officers. They shared with them professional military experience

<sup>1</sup> *Evenkiiskaya novaya zhizn*, November 7, 1945.

and skill. Just as in the pre-war period, the Russian people cemented the friendship and fraternity of the peoples of the USSR. They played a decisive role in crushing nazi Germany and imperialist Japan.

The labour and combat exploits of the northern peoples during the war were clear evidence of the triumph of socialism and Lenin's nationalities policy.

### 3. The Concluding Stage of Socialist Construction. Historic Victories

Having triumphed over the nazis, the Soviet Union began to heal the wounds inflicted by the war. The soldiers returned to peaceful labour and began to rehabilitate the ruined economy.

The Yenisei North did not become the scene of military action, if we do not count the attempt by a German heavy cruiser to attack Dikson Island in August 1942 (the pirates were repelled).<sup>1</sup> But the working people of the North nevertheless faced difficult and complicated problems.

The first post-war elections to the local Soviets were held in December 1947. They were conducted under the slogan of the fulfilment of the Fourth Five-Year Plan and the further economic and cultural development of the Soviet people.

In Taimyr and Evenk national areas more than half (58.9 per cent) of the total of 748 deputies were from the indigenous population. In the nomadic Soviets the natives were represented by 284 (69.6 per cent) of the total of 408 deputies.

The broad representation of the peoples of the North in the local Soviets was a manifestation of their sovereignty.

It should be noted that representatives of other nations and peoples, primarily Russians, also live on the territories

<sup>1</sup> *Istoriya Velikoi Otechestvennoi voini Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945* (The History of the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War in 1941-1945), Vol. 2, Moscow, 1961, p. 469.



of national areas. This is why 205 Russians were elected to the Soviets in Taimyr, and 87—in Evenkia. In this way the peoples of the North displayed their great faith in the Russian people as a great force cementing the friendship of the peoples of the USSR.

Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Tatars and representatives of other nationalities have also been elected to the local Soviets.

The election returns indicated that the voters were well organised and imbued with patriotic feelings, that they had rallied closely around the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. All the deputies were candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-Communists; they won the absolute majority of votes.

Many of the natives were promoted to executive posts. The Dolgan A. N. Porotov, war veteran and chairman of the Bolshevik collective farm, was elected chairman of the Executive Committee of the Avam district Soviet; the Nenets Tesedo Lalka was elected deputy chairman of the Ust-Yenisei district Soviet; the Evenk M. P. Koinachenok became chairman of the Evenk area Soviet; chairman of the Ilimpia district Soviet was the Yakut S.L. Beti, and of the Baikits district Soviet—the Evenk P. N. Kaplin.

In the meantime the collective farms of the Yenisei North were consolidating and developing their economy.

The fur industry remained predominant. The polar fox was mainly procured in Taimyr—it accounted for 87.2 per cent of the fur-bearing animals caught in 1957. The polar fox population varies from season to season, and that of course affects the size of the catch. In the Evenk area, the staple game comprised sable, squirrel and ermine.

Fur farming, which was first started in the 1950s was further developed. This was a new branch of collective-farm production. In Taimyr, three collective farms built enclosures for 25 animals each. In 1957 there were 10 fur farms with a total of 569 foxes.

In the same year they started to breed blue polar foxes brought from the Murmansk fur farm.

The breeding of animals in cages, first started in Evenkia in 1944, began to make rapid progress after 1950. By 1958 there were 21 animal-breeding farms.

Farm-produced furs began to occupy an important place in the general procurement of furs and in the incomes of collective farms. In 1957 they accounted for 18.9 per cent of the total incomes of collective farms.

Fur farming in national areas was becoming one of the most important branches of production on collective farms and state farms, a strong and stable reserve of their economy.

Reindeer-breeding in the post-war period is characterised by the following figures (in 000 head):

| Area   | 1945 | 1950 | 1957 |
|--------|------|------|------|
| Taimyr | 74.1 | 87.7 | 86.5 |
| Evenk  | 49.6 | 38.6 | 43.7 |

Many advanced farms and individual reindeer-breeders achieved good results.

The further development of reindeer-breeding became an urgent task.

Dairy farming and crop farming were also being gradually developed.

Events proved that small collective farms could not utilise the conditions prevailing in the North, all the advantages of the collective-farm system and develop on the basis of expanded reproduction. Even here in the North, collective farms with less than 50 able-bodied members could not successfully develop all the branches of their economy (reindeer-breeding, fishing and the fur industry); they were compelled to restrict themselves to only one activity, thus narrowing the economic base. Such farms were, as a rule, engaged in simple and not expanded reproduction. But at the same time, practice also proved that any farm in the North, be it collective or state, which violated the traditional complex of the economy and the correct combination of its various branches, was liable to fail.

This is why some small collective farms began to amalgamate as early as the 1940s. In 1943, for instance, four simple production associations amalgamated into the single



"Put Lenina" agricultural artel with the centre at the Yessei trading post. This new collective farm had 221 members (665 together with family members). In 1945 the "Put Lenina" collective farm derived an income of 1 million rubles, thus becoming Evenkia's first "millionaire" collective farm.

In the Taimyr area, collective farms were also amalgamated. In 1949 there were 41 simple production associations instead of 56 in 1937. In 1945 all fishermen's artels in Taimyr came under the Rules of the agricultural artels.

The amalgamation of collective farms called for better guidance by Party and Soviet organisations and for greater Party influence in the villages.

At the end of December 1950 the people of Taimyr and Evenkia celebrated their national holiday—the 20th anniversary of the formation of their national areas.

The anniversary was preceded by socialist emulation. In Evenkia, the emulation was initiated by the people of Ilimpia district.

The names of 8 nomad Soviets, 10 collective farms and 120 leading hunters were inscribed on the area's Board of Honour for fulfilling the fur procurement plan ahead of schedule. Success attended the labour efforts of reindeer-breeders in Evenkia.

The development of the principal branches of collective-farm production during the Fourth Five-Year Plan boosted the economy of collective farms in Evenkia. Their cash income increased from 4,922,600 to 7,040,100 rubles, and non-distributable assets, from 7,615,900 to 11,116,800 rubles. As a result, the collective farms increased payments for workdays. Income per household in the area went up from 5,600 to 6,100 rubles.

Important results were achieved on the cultural front. In 1950 the Taimyr and Evenk areas had 75 schools with 600 teachers and 7,722 pupils, including 1,676 children of indigenous population. There were 96 district and village clubs, libraries, "red chooms", reading-cottages, museums and other cultural centres.

The cultural growth was an important achievement registered by the peoples of the North. During the years of Soviet power organisers of Soviets and collective-farm produc-

tion, leaders of Party, Soviet and Komsomol organisations, teachers, cultural and health workers, and other specialists from the indigenous population of the North were fostered.

Many workers, collective farmers and cultural workers, Party, Soviet and economic executives were awarded orders and medals at the end of 1950 in connection with the 20th anniversary of the Taimyr and Evenk areas and in recognition of their accomplishments in the development of economy. In Taimyr, 147 people were given awards, and in Evenkia—100 people. Nearly half of them were Evenks, Nentsi, Dolgans, Entsi, Nganasans and Yakuts.

The Order of Lenin—the highest in the country—was given to the following hunters and reindeer-breeders: the Dolgan S. I. Bettu, the Evenks G. S. Bayaki and F. M. Yalogir, and the Nenets P. Y. Togi; it was also given to the Yakut K. K. Wodai, chairman of the "Put Lenina" collective farm in Ilimpia district, and Y. T. Strelkova, first secretary of the Ilimpia district committee of the CPSU.

The letter of congratulations, which the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR sent to the area committee of the CPSU and the executive committee of the area Soviet, read in part: "In the past 20 years the people of the area, guided by the Leninist nationalities policy, the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government, have, in the united family of the peoples of the USSR, achieved significant successes in economic and cultural development. The area has successfully developed local industries, collective-farm reindeer-breeding; income from hunting is growing; the cultural level of the people is on the rise." The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR expressed confidence that the people in the area "would attain new successes in the development of the economy and culture and would strengthen in every way the might of our socialist Motherland".<sup>1</sup>

The celebration of the 20th anniversary of the national areas demonstrated the unity and solidarity of the peoples of the North with the Communist Party and the triumph of the Leninist nationalities policy.

<sup>1</sup> SAENA, fd. 1, reg. 1, f. 889, 1. 2.



An important instrument for implementing the Party's Leninist nationalities policy in national areas is the selection and training of national cadres. National cadres were trained in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and Leninist friendship among nations. National origin cannot and should not be the principal or decisive criterion in promoting cadres. Just as in the Party as a whole, the selection and distribution of cadres in national areas is based on their loyalty to the Communist Party, the ideas of communism and socialist internationalism, and their efficiency, initiative and persistence in the implementation of the Party line.

The central Party and Soviet organs attentively examined the needs and requirements of the peoples of the North for the further development of their economy and culture, and for the training of national cadres. On September 3, 1956, the Bureau of the CC CPSU discussed the state of work in the North. A commission of responsible executives of the CC CPSU and the RSFSR Council of Ministers was formed to study the question in detail.

The commission prepared a draft of the resolution of the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers which was discussed at the end of October of the same year at a conference attended by Party and Soviet executives from the northern districts.

In March 1957, the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a decision "On Measures for the Further Development of the Economy and Culture of the Peoples of the North" which said: "The nations and peoples of the Far North—Yakuts, Komi, Nentsi, Khanty, Mansi, Evenks, Koryaks, Chukchi, Evens, Dolgans, Itelmens, Kets, Aleuts, Nanais, Nganasans, Negidalses, Nivkhi, Oroks, Oroches, Saami, Selkups, Tofalars, Udegheis, Ulchis, Chuvans, Entsi, Eskimos, Yukagirs—have achieved successes in their economic and cultural development on the basis of the Leninist nationalities policy. In the past, many of these peoples had no written languages of their own; they for the most part led a nomadic way of life and they were doomed to extinction. Today, under the Soviet socialist system, these areas have a mining industry with modern machines, developed fishing industry, water and air transport; Komi ASSR, Yamalo-Nenets and Taimyr national areas have rail-

ways. As a result of these socialist changes, the peoples of the Far North, fraternally assisted by all the peoples of the Soviet Union, are leading, in the main, a settled life, ensured economic development, have fostered a sizable intelligentsia of their own, built a network of schools, medical, and cultural centres, and, in a number of places, comfortable settlements; they all have the opportunity of further developing their economy and culture."<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers pointed out serious mistakes and shortcomings in the management of economic and cultural development in the Far North, indicated the sources of these errors, and prepared a broad programme for assisting in the development of the economy and culture of the northern peoples, with utmost consideration for their national distinctions.

The decision was discussed by the plenary meetings of the Party's area and district committees, sessions of local Soviets, meetings of collective farmers and workers of state farms, and meetings of citizens in the settlements. The people of the North enthusiastically approved the decision, regarding it as the Party's and the Government's special attention to the peoples of the North and to the development of their economy and culture.

Thus, the decision became a programme-document for the Party organisations in the North, it defined and directed their work during this new phase in the life of the Soviet people, marked by the general construction of communism. At the same time, the decision summed up the results of the 40-year period of development of the peoples of the North.

The victory of socialism has brought about radical changes in the politics, economy, culture, ideology, language and mode of life of the northern peoples. The Great October Socialist Revolution eradicated political lawlessness and colonial and national oppression. The peoples of the North became equal and full-fledged members of socialist society, its active builders; they created their own national statehood.

Patriarchal economic forms were replaced by the socialist mode of production, collective-farm system and planned

<sup>1</sup> *Resheniya partii i pravitelstva po khozyaistvennim voprosam (1917-1967)*, (Decisions of the Party and Government on Economic Problems), Vol. 4, Moscow, 1968, p. 331.



economy. The difficult task of reorganising the primitive and backward industries and reindeer-breeding, based on the patriarchal mode of life, into a socialist economy was accomplished.

From universal illiteracy and oppression to native written languages and literatures, to a national intelligentsia—such was the road of cultural development traversed by the peoples of the North. The cultural revolution scored decisive successes in the Soviet North.

The victory of socialism in the North introduced a culture to the peoples of the North both socialist in content and national in form. The beneficial influence of the culture of the Russian nation was of tremendous importance for its formation.

The victory of socialism also radically changed the way of thinking and the psychology of the peoples of the North.

Before the October Revolution, the interests of the northerner did not go beyond those of the clan or the tribe. The victory of socialism made the peoples of the North equal and free members of socialist society, masters of the country. In the course of socialist construction, a primitive ideology and world outlook were replaced by socialist ideology. A new, Soviet man of broad and versatile interests, a genuine internationalist, a convinced political champion of the ideals of socialism was born as a result of the victory of socialism.

The construction of socialism introduced radical changes in the way of life and in family relations. The indigenous population of the North is leading a settled life. Collective-farm and state-farm settlements appeared in the taiga and tundra.

The archaic family forms and wedlock relations—*kalims* (ransom for brides), polygamy, inequality of women—disappeared. Northern women attained an equal position in the family and in production, they became active participants in socialist construction.

Better food and clothes improved the health standards.

Major changes in national relations and in the ethnic composition of the population were also observed. Before Soviet power, the peoples of the North lived in isolated clan-tribal groups. Socialism did away with the age-long isolation of clans and tribes. At the inception of socialist

construction, the Soviets and the simple production associations as a rule encompassed single clans or a clan-tribal group of a certain nationality. When the clan Soviets were reorganised into normal territorial Soviets and the collective farms were amalgamated, the various clan and tribal groups were also amalgamated into single economic units. That spelled the end of clan and tribal barriers and isolation, and created favourable conditions for the eradication of enmity and mistrust between clans and tribes; in sum, it brought them closer together. In the course of socialist construction, the clan-tribal associations served as the basis for the formation of the *socialist nationalities*.

The peoples of the North joined as equal members the new historic community—the Soviet people.

In his report "Fifty Years of Great Achievements of Socialism", Leonid Brezhnev said: "The whole world knows of the success of the Leninist nationalities policy. All the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union are flourishing and have achieved colossal progress in the promotion of industry, agriculture, science and culture. Socialism has set in motion a mighty driving force of our development like friendship among nations."<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the North regarded the friendship with fraternal peoples, primarily the Russian people, as the guarantee of their subsequent prosperity.

The continual assistance from the Russian people played a decisive role in the construction of socialism in the North. Life has shown that without such assistance, the peoples of the North could not have overcome their backwardness and patriarchalism and made the transition to socialism. The Thesis of the CC CPSU "50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution" pointed out the following: "All the peoples of the Soviet Union recognise that the Russian working class and the Russian people as a whole played a huge role in implementing the Leninist nationalities policy."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1972, pp. 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> *50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, Moscow, p. 15.



The friendship and fraternity of nations is the cornerstone of the Soviet multinational state.

The decision of the CC CPSU "On the Preparation for the 50th Anniversary of the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" said: "*All the peoples of our country could see from the experience over many years that their unification in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has yielded great results and opened grand prospects for the future...*" says the decision "On the Preparation for the 50th Anniversary of the USSR". "Creative energy and abilities and the gifts of all nations and nationalities of the Soviet state have been completely revealed in their fraternal unity."<sup>1</sup>

The leadership of the Communist Party was the decisive factor ensuring the victory of socialism. One of the merits of the Communist Party consists in the fact that it formed strong Marxist-Leninist Party organisations in the national border areas, organisations which unified the progressive representatives of all nationalities on the principles of proletarian internationalism.

The national Communist organisations developed and grew stronger under the direct impact of the Party's nucleus—the Russian nucleus, applying its rich organisational and theoretical experience. This played a tremendous role in the ideological and organisational consolidation of the young national detachments of the Communist Party.

The Party organisations in the North were the inspirers and organisers of socialist construction. They blazed the trail across the untrodden land from the clan system to socialism. They made enormous efforts to liquidate the age-long backwardness of the peoples of the North, and they guided them through the transition to socialism, by-passing capitalism.

Primitive shamanistic customs and superstitions, clan vestiges, as well as exploitation and poverty retreated slowly. Nevertheless, the new brought in by the Russian Communists and strongly supported by the toiling people, triumphed.

The Communist Party always attributed great significance to the development of the North and the elevation of its productive forces. It called into service outstanding scientists, state and Party leaders.

<sup>1</sup> *Kommunist* No. 3, 1972, pp. 8-9.

On the basis of Marxist-Leninist science, the Communist Party directed the efforts of Soviet scientists to the study of the productive forces of the North, the history, ethnography, economy and languages of the Northern peoples. Our country was the first to evolve a new science—the science of the North.

The Thesis of the CC CPSU "The 50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution", summarising the path travelled by the Soviet people, including the peoples of the North, said: "The October Revolution and the building of socialism awakened and roused to independent activity formerly backward peoples, some of which were thus saved from physical extinction. *During the building of socialism they acquired their own statehood, put an end to their economic and cultural backwardness and gradually adopted the highest socialist forms of economy and culture. This achievement was all the more remarkable in view of the fact that many nations which, when the Revolution was accomplished, had been at the stage of feudalism or even the patriarchal-clan system, by-passed capitalism in their progress towards socialism.*"<sup>1</sup>

The significant achievements of the peoples of the North illustrate the remarkable insight and prescience of the Leninist nationalities policy of the Communist Party.

<sup>1</sup> *50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, Moscow, p. 15.



## On the Road to Communism

### 1. The Struggle for the Creation of the Material and Technical Base of Communism. The Further Improvement of Social Relations

... Socialism is the society that grows directly out of capitalism, it is the first form of the new society. Communism is a higher form of society, and can only develop when socialism has become firmly established.

V. I. Lenin

The heroic efforts of the northern people are a valuable contribution to the construction of the developed socialist society in the USSR. Together with all the other Soviet peoples, the peoples of the North are building communist society.

The focal point of the Soviet people's struggle for communism is the economy, the creation of the material and technical base of communism.

The Far North became one of the country's major economic centres during the years of Soviet power. It is a real treasury of natural wealth, containing nearly half of the country's timber reserves, two-thirds of estimated reserves of coal (90 per cent of which are located in the Tungus, Lena and Taimyr coal basins), one-fifth of estimated reserves of gas, and quite a significant amount of oil. It is estimated that the potential power resources of rivers in the North amount to 67 per cent of the country's aggregate resources.

Well-known diamond fields, gold deposits, tin, nickel, mica, apatites and many other minerals required for the development of the country's economy, are all found in the North. Each of the elements contained in the Periodic Table may be found here.

Large-scale industrial development of the territory is being carried out through the utilisation of these tremendous natural resources.

The Yenisei North occupies a prominent place in the economy of Krasnoyarsk Region. During the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1966-70) industrial development there reached an unprecedented level. The Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Plant continues to be in the lead. The Directives of the Party's 23rd Congress said: "The Norilsk plant shall be extended by working the rich nickel and copper deposits at Talnakh."<sup>1</sup>

Natural gas was discovered in 1969, and now the Messo-yakha-Dudinka-Norilsk is the northernmost gas pipeline in the world. The gasification of enterprises in Norilsk stepped up their production.

The North is provided with modern machines and plants. Taimyr produces copper, nickel, cobalt, precious and rare metals.

Electricity is employed on a wide scale. The Soviet people have set into operation the Talnakh thermal electric-power station; on November 20, 1970, the Khantai station—the world's northernmost hydro-electric power station—began to generate electricity for industry. Builders are erecting the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, Osinovka and the Igarka hydro-electric power stations. Electricity will oust the polar night and change the face of the North.

Timber enterprises along the Igarka have been modernised. Many countries are importing the outstanding Siberian timber, particularly pine.

The Noginsk pit produced thousands of tons of high-quality graphite. Now the pit is being modernised, and soon its capacity will be doubled or trebled.

The North is laying bare its wealth. Geological survey, particularly the search for oil and gas, is being conducted on an unprecedented scale. Geologists discovered deposits of Iceland spar in the Evenk National Area. They are of great importance for the country's economy.

More than 2,000 deposits of minerals have been discovered in the Evenk area.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 23rd Congress of the CPSU, p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> *Geologiya i poleznye iskopyemiye zapadnoi chasti Sibirskoi platformy* (Geology and Minerals in the west of the Siberian Platform. Reports at the First Evenk Geological Conference, Krasnoyarsk, 1970.



But the North has not as yet fully revealed its wealth. Once the surveys are finished, it will become a unique economic region.

Rapid industrial development has required an intensive development of sea, river and air transport and communications.

Large-scale economic development is closely linked with the development of culture and a rise in the living standards of the indigenous population.

In drawing up plans for economic development, the Soviet people believe that all republics and regions must give priority to the branches for which there are most favourable natural, climatic and economic conditions. The North has opportunities for developing reindeer-breeding, fishing, hunting and trapping. The development of these industries corresponds to the natural conditions and the mode of life of the indigenous population. They are at once profitable and supply commodities which cannot be produced elsewhere.

This, however, does not preclude the expediency of developing dairy farming, meat production, potato and vegetable cultivation, or of other branches of agriculture in areas with favourable natural and economic conditions.

Fur farming and hunting are the dominant industries. Thanks to the socialist changes carried out during the years of Soviet power, hunting for fur-bearing animals is now based on scientific principles. Their further application is dictated by the fact that hunting has always been the leading commercial branch of the North. Furs (ermine, squirrel, polar fox, sable, polecat, etc.) have always been an important item of Soviet exports.

The Soviet North has vast and abundant hunting grounds and therefore opportunities for further developing hunting as an industry and increasing the fur resources. Hunting is one of the oldest occupations of the local population. It is precisely this industry which befits their mode of life and in which they have accumulated vast experience.

In the period from 1959 to 1965, the hunters of Taimyr, Evenkia and Turukhansk district have produced 16 million rubles' worth of furs, including 10 million rubles' worth from hunting and 6 million rubles' worth from fur farming.

Many outstanding hunters have been awarded the Order of Lenin.

Hunting is now supplemented by fur farming. The latter has its opponents and supporters. The opponents insist that the fur farms in the North are unprofitable. There is some truth in this argument. But it has been proved that, given good and efficient management, fur farming can be profitable. Thus it has a good future. The Evenk National Area, for instance, has accumulated solid experience in this respect. In the period from 1959 to 1965, the local breeder delivered more than 3 million rubles' worth of furs, i.e., 42.8 per cent of furs produced in the area.

In distinction from hunting, fur farming is unaffected by the elements, and it guarantees stable incomes and employment for the population.

Contrary to the view of sceptics, fur farming is consolidating its position. It should be noted here that the potential for increasing its profitability and intensity are quite large.

Reindeer-breeding also developed at a good pace during the 1959-65 economic plan. In Taimyr and Evenk national areas, the reindeer population increased by 50 per cent—from 118,800 to 180,000 head. The total population of reindeer in the Far North increased from 1,991,000 to 2,360,400.

In 1965 most of the reindeer were kept by collective farms (74.1 per cent) and state farms (7.8 per cent); only 10.1 per cent were owned by collective farmers individually. The incomes from reindeer-breeding went up from 7.3 to 24.7 per cent of the total incomes of collective farms. Credit for this should go to the efficient work of breeders. The renowned teams led by Lyakho Vengo and A. G. Chuprin in Taimyr, and T. F. Chapogir and N. I. Tasachi in Evenkia were awarded the Orders of Lenin.

Reindeer-breeding became one of the leading and most profitable branches of production on collective farms and state farms. Its size and productivity ensured it first place in the economy of northern collective and state farms.

According to data collected in 1961, 178 collective farms in the Far North derived 35 per cent and more, in some regions and areas, of their cash income from reindeer-breeding and reindeer transportations.



Fishing, particularly in the Taimyr area and Turukhansk district, is also one of the leading occupations. The Yenisei basin accounts for 90 per cent of the catch in Krasnoyarsk Territory. In the Evenk area and Khatanga district fish is caught only for local consumption.

In 1958 the collective farms in Taimyr obtained 26.5 per cent of their cash incomes from fishing, and in Evenkia, only 1.2 per cent.

Generally, the prospects for the further development of fishing in the Yenisei North are favourable. Pelargic fishing in rivers and lakes on the other hand may result in the total disappearance of huchen, white salmon, grayling, sturgeon and other valuable species in a few years' time. The Yenisei North can become a major fish reservation.

The complex economy of the peoples of the North—hunting, reindeer-breeding, fishing and the new, very promising branch—fur farming—is being developed on a new socialist basis.

In the 1960s, significant changes were introduced in the structure of agricultural enterprises in the Yenisei North. Firstly, the strengthening of collective farms was continued, and secondly, many collective farms were reorganised into state farms.

Proper organisation of productive activity on each farm is of primary importance for its successful development, notably the optimal utilisation of grazing, hunting and fishing grounds, as well as of machines and labour resources.

The following four types of farms or productive activities can be distinguished in the Yenisei North: 1) trades with reindeer-breeding as a subsidiary branch; 2) reindeer-breeding with trades as subsidiary; 3) trades and cattle-breeding as subsidiary; 4) animal-breeding with trades as subsidiary. It has been proved in practice that only given the proper combination of all these branches can the economy be effective. This concerns all agricultural enterprises.

The period of building communism is characterised by the broad introduction of machinery into northern agriculture and industries. The collective-farm system has raised thou-

sands of advanced workers and organisers of collective-and-state farm production. A.G. Aretagin, a leader of a team of reindeer-breeders on the "Pervii Revkom" collective farm in Chukotka, told the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers of the successes of the collective-farm system in these words: "The small nations of the Soviet North have been reinvigorated by the Leninist nationalities policy. During the years of Soviet power a genuine revolution in the mode of life of the former nomads—reindeer-breeders and fishermen—has occurred.

"From smoky *chooms*, *yurts* and tents to comfortable houses: from the dim oil lantern to the electric lamp; from illiteracy and ignorance to radio and television; from the dog sledges to powerful tractors, cars and airplanes—such is the progress made by our people."<sup>1</sup>

Today the socialist agriculture and local industries in the Soviet North are represented by 247 collective farms and 239 state farms which possess a total of 2 million reindeer, 250,000 head of cattle, 100,000 pigs, plenty of machines and equipment.

In the future, as the immeasurable wealth of the Far North is further tapped, the population will grow, and so will the demand for meat, milk, potatoes, vegetables and other farm products. The Directives of the 24th Congress of the CPSU say: "A further growth of hunting, fishery and whaling, and of fur farming shall be secured in the Northern and Far Eastern areas, and the productivity of reindeer farming shall be raised."<sup>2</sup> The development of agriculture and local industries is a very important economic task posed in the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1971-75). The great natural resources of the North must be fully utilised in the interests of building communism.

The national areas are the basic form of Soviet autonomy and the national statehood of the northern peoples. The decision of the CC CPSU "On the Preparation for the 50th Anniversary of the USSR" said: "The political development of

<sup>1</sup>The Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers, November 25-27, 1969, Minutes, Moscow, 1970, p. 264 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup>24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 301.

nations revived by the revolution is also manifest in the formation of autonomous republics, autonomous regions and national areas."

Usually, a national area is a unit of a territory or region. For instance, the Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) and the Evenk national areas are part of Krasnoyarsk Territory. The executive committees of territorial and regional Soviets are responsible for the economic and cultural development of national areas. The area Soviets are subordinate to territorial or regional executive committees, through which they maintain contacts with the government of the Russian Federation.

There are 10 national areas in the RSFSR, seven of which are in the North: Koryak, Nenets, Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets), Khanty-Mansi, Chukotsk, Evenk and Yamalo-Nenets areas. They occupy nearly 23 per cent of the total territory of the RSFSR and 17.4 per cent of the territory of the USSR.

In the period from 1926 to 1969, the population in the national areas increased by 5.2 times; the increase was particularly marked in areas of intensive exploitation of natural resources and industrial development.

The growth of the population in the Far North is a logical accompaniment to the rapid development of its productive forces, economy and culture.

The national areas have always been multinational. The Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) National Area is inhabited by Nenetsi, Entsi, Nganasans, Dolgans, Yakuts and Evenks representing diverse language and ethnic communities. The language barrier presented difficulties in the socialist reorganisation of their economy and mode of life.

The Evenk National Area is inhabited mostly by Evenks and a small number of Yakuts—the so-called Essei Yakuts. Kets live in area under the Sulomai village Soviet; Selkups, Kets and Evenks live in the Turukhansk district, and Evenks and some Yakuts live in Khatanga district.

The multinational character of the national areas was accentuated during the construction of socialism through the influx of people of other nationalities. According to the census of 1959, the Taimyr National Area was inhabited by 21 nations and peoples, and the Evenk area, by represen-

tatives of 13 nationalities. The figures for 1970 were 37 and 26, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

This is a natural process reflecting the internationalisation of economic and cultural life under socialism.

The influx of people from other parts of the country will undoubtedly increase with the economic development of the national areas. Thus these areas will become more multinational in character. The percentage of the peoples of the North among the population in the areas will probably decrease, though in absolute numbers there is bound to be an increase.

The national area as a form of national autonomy and statehood for the peoples of the North will be retained during the period of building socialism. This conclusion is drawn from Lenin's premises. Replying to a letter from S.G. Said-Galiyev in July 1921 in which the latter had asked two questions: "Is there need for the existence of small autonomous republics within the Russian Soviet Federation in general...? If the answer is 'yes', then for how long, or, in other words, until the fulfilment of what tasks or the attainment of what goals?", Lenin wrote: "To the first question—yes. . . . To the second—for a long time yet."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin's "for a long time yet" is of exceptional importance for understanding the prospects for the development of Soviet autonomy, Soviet federation.

At the new phase of the development of Soviet society, the national areas, as a form of national autonomy for the peoples of the North, embody state-organisational power designed for the solution of the tasks of communist construction.

The administrative-territorial division and the determination of the borders of Soviets is of great significance for improving their work and strengthening the organisational role of the local organs of state power.

A number of changes were made in the administrative-territorial division of the Yenisei North in recent years; the borders of districts and village Soviets were defined more precisely.

<sup>1</sup> *The Results of the All-Union Census of 1959, RSFSR*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 26-29 (in Russian); *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, pp. 541, 703.



In connection with industrial development, urban-type settlements—Talnakh and Snezhnogorsk—went up near Norilsk. Some village Soviets were enlarged.

A few village Soviets in the Taimyr National Area were renamed. Formerly, they were given the names in conformity with the nationality of the inhabitants, and that created some inconveniences. Now the village Soviets carry the names of the localities where they are located.

Thus the network of Soviets in the Yenisei North consists, as of January 1, 1970, of two area (Taimyr and Evenk), three town (Dudinka, Norilsk and Igarka), seven district (Diskon, Ust-Yenisei, Khatanga, Baikit, Ilimpia, Tunguska-Chuna, and Turukhansk), 51 village and three settlement Soviets. The total number of deputies is 2,104. This fully complies with the new tasks and requirements of communist construction.

The peoples of the North are broadly represented in the Soviets of the national areas. Thus, the local Soviets in the Taimyr National Area have a total of 670 deputies, 320 of whom are representatives of the peoples of the North; in the Evenk area, 320 deputies of the total of 451 are representatives of the indigenous population.

The economic and cultural development envisaged by the Party's 23rd Congress became a programme of work for the local Soviets in the Taimyr and Evenk national areas during the Eighth Five-Year Plan. That period was marked by a new upsurge in the economy and culture, and further development of the productive forces.

The USSR Supreme Soviet conferred the Order of the Red Banner of Labour on the Taimyr and Evenk national areas for their economic and cultural accomplishments. Hundreds of people were awarded government distinctions. Georgy Bayaki, a hunter on the Poligusov state farm in the Evenk area, and Khansut Yaptune, a team leader of reindeer-breeders of the "Zarya Taimyra" collective farm, were given the titles of Heroes of Socialist Labour for their outstanding accomplishments.

The Directives of the 24th Congress of the CPSU have indicated much greater scale of development for the North during the Ninth Five-Year Plan.

## 2. The Peoples of the North Today

In their cultural development, the peoples of the North have really made a gigantic step from the culture of the primitive to that of socialist society. Socialism encourages the most oppressed nations to independent creative work and, as Lenin said, destroys "hidebound national conservatism in the various backwoods".<sup>1</sup>

The principal means for further cultural development during the large-scale construction of communism is the general development of the system of education, general schools, the training of highly qualified specialists, and new upsurge of literature and arts.

The rapid development of the productive forces in the North prompted an influx of people from other parts of the country, and that increased the number of schools and school-children. In 1968/69 there were 125 schools in the Yenisei North, including 33 secondary schools with a total of 41,377 pupils; in the same year there were 2,389 teachers, 2,141 of whom had a higher education. In the Taimyr and Evenk national areas and in Turukhansk district there were 92 schools, including 13 secondary schools; 12,636 pupils, including 3,422 native children; and 1,017 teachers, including 149 native teachers. The fact that native teachers with advanced training are working in the northern schools is a vivid indicator of the general growth of the culture of the peoples of the North.

Outstanding teachers and educational specialists are working in the North. Many of them have been given the titles of Honoured Teachers of the RSFSR.

Many of the teachers are highly experienced, they love the severe land, its inhabitants and their children.

One of the veterans is the Honoured Teacher of the RSFSR L. I. Spiridonova. This is what she said on October 20, 1966, in the *Sovietsky Taimyr*: "I have been won by the sincerity, honesty and friendliness of the indigenous northerners. I often think about my pupil Chok, a Nenets boy.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 30.

He was at odds with arithmetic, so he sat late into the night, refusing to go to the dormitory. 'Enough, Chok!' I would tell him. 'No, I want to understand,' was his unfailing answer!"

One of the most complicated social problems—the eradication of illiteracy among the adult population—was completely solved in the early sixties. In Soviet conditions, it took only one generation to solve what colonial and the civilised countries have failed to do in many centuries. Today it is just as difficult to find an illiterate man in the Soviet North, as it is to find a representative of the oppressed small nations in bourgeois parliaments.

In 1959, there were 385 people with higher or secondary education per 1,000 of the population in Taimyr, in 1970 there were already 556. The corresponding figures for Evenkia were 342 and 453. In 1970 there were 683 people with higher or secondary education per 1,000 of those employed in Taimyr, and 589 in Evenkia.<sup>1</sup>

Is this not convincing proof of the advantages and vitality of socialism?

The Programme of the CPSU says that "the big scale of communist construction and the new victories of communist ideology are enriching the cultures of the peoples of the USSR, which are socialist in content and national in form. There is a growing ideological unity among the nations and nationalities and a greater rapprochement of their cultures."<sup>2</sup>

This can be seen from the example of the cultural development in the North.

Great Russian culture exercises a tremendous influence on the culture of the peoples of the North. It is a progressive phenomenon from all points of view.

It is obvious that all nations, nationalities and peoples, big or small, have contributed in the course of many centuries to world civilisation and mankind's culture. Just as countless rivers and rivulets form the ocean, so the endless varieties of national cultures form the common culture of mankind.

The peoples of the North, who have developed a peculiar material and spiritual culture reflecting their social and eco-

nomic evolution and the peculiar conditions of life in the North, have also made their contribution to world civilisation, to mankind's culture. The Communist Party supports and encourages the national culture and cultural accomplishments of even the smallest nations. It not only protects the progressive elements of their national culture, but disseminates them among other Soviet peoples, introducing them as components into the Soviet multinational culture.

Lenin said that "guarding the heritage does not mean confining oneself to the heritage".<sup>1</sup> The Soviet people carefully guard everything progressive in culture and life modes, in traditions and habits; they develop these progressive elements and, on that basis, are creating the socialist culture of the multinational Soviet people—socialist in content and national in form. Socialist culture is thus a genuinely people's culture, a logical sequel to the achievements of all Soviet peoples and world culture.

The national forms of culture of the fraternal Soviet peoples making up the common socialist, international culture is of great importance for the Soviet multinational state.

Lenin said that "international culture is not non-national".<sup>2</sup>

Each Soviet people has its own specific form of culture distinct from that of other peoples. This precisely is its contribution to the common Soviet socialist culture of the peoples of the USSR.

During the socialist cultural revolution, the peoples, who before the revolution were at a primitive phase had to adopt and assimilate the accomplishments of the advanced nations and to retain everything progressive accumulated during their own historical evolution, while further developing progressive traditions and customs. Resoluteness is just as necessary here as in any other revolutionary cause. Outmoded forms of culture and life patterns, traditions and customs had to be boldly discarded; the culture, progressive traditions and modern modes of life of the fraternal peoples must be adopted just as boldly, without violating or abandoning national culture and traditions.

<sup>1</sup> *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 561.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 526.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 24.



But balance here is most vital. Any deviation, any fore-stallment or attempt to accomplish the tasks without mature objective conditions is fraught with great harm. The cultural accomplishments of other peoples must be carefully assessed. The Communist Party has always tactfully and respectfully treated the progressive forms of culture, traditions and customs of the Soviet peoples. Lenin wrote: "That is why in this case it is better to overdo than to underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities."<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the North have created their own culture, their own traditions and customs which are carefully guarded and developed on socialist principles and which have become available to other fraternal peoples.

It took many centuries for the hunters, reindeer-breeders and fishermen of the North to evolve their work habits. It needed great presence of mind, courage and boldness to attack the bear with a spear. In the past, the northern hunters knew nothing about even a fire-lock. In spite of untold hardships, sometimes entailing death from starvation, the peoples of the North retained great optimism.

Adopting work habits and customs from each other, the peoples of the North and the Russian peasants developed over a long interval the productive forces in the North, and concurrently they imperceptibly coined the elements of the future friendship and fraternity which came with socialism.

However, the northerner's work before the revolution was of poor productivity, it was insufficient to meet even minimal subsistence requirements. So the peoples of the North eked out a poverty-ridden life.

Socialism has radically changed the character of work, it has become the labour of free and equal members of socialist society. Modern machines came to the assistance of the northerner, his work became productive and necessary for the prosperity of the whole country. His work is just as important for the country as the work of steel-smelters, grain-growers, oilmen or cotton-growers.

Labour for the benefit of society fosters the best features of the future citizen of the communist society. Nothing can draw people so closely together as joint, collective labour.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 609.

Karl Marx's words that in communist society "its national ruler will be everywhere the same—Labour!"<sup>1</sup> are coming true.

The best features of the internationalist are being implanted in the collective of Soviet people regardless of nationality or race, through joint work for the country's benefit.

There is hardly a community in the North without representatives of different nationalities working together. People of 11 nationalities are working together in the Evenk area communal services centre, and people of 10 nationalities are working side by side on the Tutonchan state farm.

Addressing the area meeting of Party activists, V.T. Izibayev, a builder, said: "I am a Mari. I work together with Khanif Garifullin, a Tatar, Mikhail Udigir and Kim Demeshchik, both Evenks, Samsak Malakhunov, a Uzbek, Khanibzyan Shakirzyanov, an Udmurt, and others. We belong to different nationalities, but we have common interests and aspirations—to make the life of Soviet people brighter and happier.

"Therein lies the great force of the ideas of proletarian internationalism, friendship and fraternity of the peoples of the USSR. This is why great Russia with its multinational people stands strong and invincible. All plots of imperialist reaction and bourgeois ideological subversion will be crushed by this invincible fortress."

Hospitality is one of the wonderful traditions of the northern peoples. The northerner is always ready to receive guests, he loves to hear news. In the past, when there were no modern means of communication, people learned the news only from travellers. This is why the inhabitants of the taiga and tundra were glad to see any stranger.

The peoples of the North are amicable and sociable. The northerner never forgets a man even if he had seen him only once in his lifetime. This is due to an excellent visual memory. As a token of respect, the northerner names his child after the man whom he has come to like. In Baikit district many children have been named Mikhail in honour of Mikhail Osharov, a popular writer. In the village of Nakanno, Kha-

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Moscow, 1969, Vol. 2, 194.

tanga district, Irkutsk Region, many Evenk children have been named after Artem Aksamentov, who had worked there as a teacher for many years.

A dialectic approach is required to traditions and their role in society. Lenin wrote that "human concepts are not fixed but are eternally in movement, they pass into one another, they flow into one another, otherwise they do not reflect living life".<sup>1</sup>

There are also reactionary traditions which impeded the construction of socialism and the formation of the Marxist-Leninist world outlook. These included ransom for the bride (*tori*, in Evenk), archaic forms of family and marital relations, false shamanistic conceptions of nature, man and society, etc. The socialist conscience of the peoples of the North was formed and consolidated in a stubborn and ruthless struggle against these patriarchal and clan vestiges.

It was difficult task to overcome the religious beliefs based on shamanism. During a conversation with the activists in the North in 1937, Y. Yaroslavsky said: "It would be wrong to think that if religion is primitive and simple, it will die faster than the more developed and elaborated religious belief. Religion in the North cannot be regarded as a vestige which will disappear all by itself. It is a hostile ideology, and it will die only after a struggle."<sup>2</sup>

Shamanism as a form of the world outlook of the peoples of the North was vanquished only after an acute struggle and great educational work. However, it does not imply that shamanistic beliefs have disappeared completely, they are still held by some backward elements of the population.

A complicated work was carefully carried out in eradicating the primitive forms of family and marital relations, and other customs.

The main instrument in this case was the emancipation of women and the elevation of their political and cultural outlook. Socialism has changed the position of working women and freed them from the "patriarchal cobweb". Lenin wrote: "For the first time in history, our law has removed everything that denied women rights."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> CPA IML, fd. 89, reg. 1, f. 70, l. 4.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 180.

The emancipation of working women in the North and their active participation in the construction of a new life are some of the most important gains of socialism in the North.

In his report entitled "Fifty Years of the Great Victories of Socialism", Leonid Brezhnev said: "Socialism brought women genuine emancipation. It gave them broad scope for creative activity, the development of talent and ability, and the mastering of many professions, which had formerly been closed to them. They are actively participating in the administration of the state. . . . Our Soviet woman, who is a worker, mother and heroine, is worthy of the most profound respect."<sup>1</sup>

Radical changes have taken place in family and marital relations of the peoples of the North. In the course of the struggle against the archaic forms of family, a new, socialist family was created; Soviet forms of wedlock, family relations and customs have taken a strong footing.

The multinational composition of the population affects the character of national traditions, mode of life and family relations in the North.

Mixed marriages among different ethnic groups and between them and migrants from central parts of the country—Ukrainians, Russians, Letts, Byelorussians, etc.—are quite widespread in the North. Mixed marriages are doubtlessly a progressive tendency in the life of peoples. The essential conditions for such marriages are voluntariness and the absence of coercion or mercantile motives. Such marriages should be guided solely by motives of love. Frederick Engels wrote: "Thus, full freedom in marriage can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations created by it, has removed all those secondary economic considerations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner. Then, no other motive remains than mutual affection."<sup>2</sup>

People of all nationalities in the Yenisei North, just as elsewhere in the Soviet North, marry and found strong and happy mixed families. This is how N. Oyun, a Tuvanian, answered the question "Why do you love Evenkia?": "Evenkia gave me a very dear person—my wife, Augusta. In Evenkia

<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1970, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 253-54.



I learnt the joy of work. My children, Innochka and Seryozha, were born here. Their merry eyes look upon the world with vital interest. They own not only the whole of the Yenisei, but the whole planet."<sup>1</sup>

Seryozha and Inna's mother is an Evenk woman, they were born in the free land of the Soviet Union where there is no national oppression or racial enmity. They were born free and will always remain free. It is symbolic that a Tuvian who was born at the source of the mighty Yenisei River found himself a wife, an Evenk woman, who was born on the banks of the Nizhnyaya Tunguska, one of the thousand tributaries of the Yenisei.

Mixed marriages are one of the features of the Soviet way of life, a bright indication of the internationalisation of the life of Soviet people. The atmosphere in such families is conducive to raising real internationalists, active builders of communism.

Komsomol and internationalist weddings are a festive occasion in workers' communities in the North.

The peoples of the North have always been lovers of festivals. In the past, festive occasions, for instance the "bear festival", were shrouded in religious or shamanistic veils. The "bear festival" was connected with the cult of the bear as man's ancestor.

Now the peoples of the North have new holidays—celebrating liberation from national and colonial oppression, and emancipated labour. They, together with all the other Soviet peoples, celebrate the anniversaries of the October Socialist Revolution on November 7, the day of international proletarian solidarity of working people on May 1, the Day of Soviet Constitution on December 5, and the Victory Day in the Great Patriotic War on May 9.

In addition, they celebrate the day of national statehood and the birth of national areas on December 10. In honour of these holidays the working people of the North are striving to overfulfil the state plans. These memorable dates have become holidays for all Soviet peoples, big or small.

Collective and state farms celebrate their own holidays, for instance, the Reindeer-Breeder's Day in March or April

<sup>1</sup> *Sovietskaya Evenkia*, December 25, 1965.

when farmers hold their general meetings. In Evenkia these holidays are called *suglans*.

*Suglans* are festivals of labour, mirth and spring. It is the time when the hunting season and the wintering of reindeer are over, and breeders prepare for the calving. It is the time when the polar night bereft of sun for many long months, comes to an end, when there is plenty of light and nature quickly revives.

It is a peculiar send-off of the polar winter and a welcome to the sunny spring.

The construction of socialism has wrought radical changes in the mode of life of the peoples of the North. It is well known that the mode of life is the most conservative aspect of human life: it is precisely here that the outdated family traditions persist. It should be kept in mind that the mode of life is fully dependent on man's labour and productive activity.

The new social relations among the peoples of the North generated by the socialist reforms have also affected their mode of life. The population gradually abandoned the nomadic way of life. G. R. Popov, a Dolgan scientist, has this to say on the matter: "The gradual settling down of the population is the result of the new, socialist relations in production which have replaced the old, clan relations and changed the economy of the indigenous population. They have created the prerequisites for settled life patterns."<sup>1</sup>

However, the solution of this problem was not easy or simple. Its practical solution by the peoples of the North is of great significance. The main difficulty was to prevent the degradation of the traditional occupations—hunting furbearing animals, reindeer-breeding—and to ensure that the new modes would stimulate the further rise of cultural life.

One of the most important tasks in establishing settled modes is to correctly and wisely combine the productive activity with living conditions.

Housing construction has become a priority problem on which the further improvement of living conditions and willingness of cadres to stay in the North greatly depends. The

<sup>1</sup> *Leninskaya natsionalnaya politika v svete reshenii XXII syezda KPSS*, (The Leninist Nationalities Policy in the Light of the Decisions of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU), Krasnoyarsk, 1965, p. 200.

introduction of electricity and gas into everyday life is of utmost importance.

The clothes of the peoples of the North have changed in fashion. The whole world knows that over thousands of years the people in the polar regions, have devised peculiar clothes excellently adapted for the local conditions.

The northerner's clothes and dwellings are very warm and adapted to below-zero temperatures. Polar explorers have always preferred the clothes of the northern peoples.

I recall the following episode during my visit to Norway. The western capitalist countries are spreading many fabrications about the Soviet Union, particularly about the alleged Russification of the culture of the peoples of the USSR. In this connection I was asked the following question: "What have the Russians adopted from the culture of the peoples of the North?" I answered thus: I went to see your national museum and the museum of the great Nansen who is well known and greatly respected in the Soviet Union. It was a great satisfaction to me to find that your countrymen, the polar explorers F. Nansen and R. Amundsen, used the clothes of Chukchi, Saami, Evenks, Nentsi and other natives of the polar regions during their explorations. Thus, not only the Russians, but many other peoples of the world, including the Norwegians, are making use of the cultural accomplishments of the peoples of the North.

The peoples of the North still use their national clothes, particularly the winter fur garments which are so much to the liking of other peoples. The national clothes are simply indispensable for hunters and reindeer-breeders.

But many inhabitants now wear modern European clothes and shoes. And even the reindeer-breeders prefer kersey high boots to their summer footwear which offer poor protection against moisture.

The food has also changed. In the past, the northern peoples consumed mostly meat and fish, and insignificant quantities of flour (bread), sugar, butter and sweets which appeared in the North only after it became part of Russia (foodstuffs like sugar, tea, butter, sweets, spiced biscuits have retained their Russian names in the northern languages).

Thanks to the rising cultural and material standards, the food consumed by the people has become more varied, con-

forming to the requirements of civilised people. However, collective farmers and workers of state farms, occupied in hunting and reindeer-breeding, still consume substantial amounts of meat, though flour products, sugar, butter and other nourishing foods are now more prominent in their diet.

Regretfully, the methods of cooking—the northern kitchen—have not been described by anyone as yet. Though they seem simple, yet they are really peculiar and unique, embodying ages of practice, talent and wisdom.

The first years of building communism have been marked by further ideological progress in the national literatures of the peoples of the North. Their literatures have become inalienable components of the Soviet multinational literature. Young and talented writers have come to the fore.

The talent of the Evenk poet Alitet Nemtushkin has matured. He continues in the traditions of young Evenk literature established in the 1930s by A. Platonov, N. Sakharov, A. Salatkin and G. Chinkov. In the 1960s, Alitet Nemtushkin published three books of verse.<sup>1</sup> This is what Professor Voskoboinikov, a scholar of northern literature and one of its most zealous proponents, writes about Nemtushkin's poetry: "You feel great love for his country and native land in the works of the young author. His poems are full of the pathos of the struggle for man's victory over the forces of nature in the severe North. A. Nemtushkin devotes many poems to love, as well as to burning current problems."

In the poem *The Communist*, the hero is a Communist who lost his sight and a leg in a clash with the rich exploiters and shamans. Yet he remained in the ranks and became a bard of his people; the song was his weapon in the struggle for a better future.

Many new writers appeared in Evenkia, among them M. I. Bublischenko, K. I. Voronina, A. A. Kurkogir, A. G. Lukinov and A. I. Yalmarov; in the Taimyr area the *Sovietsky Taimyr* and the Norilsk *Zapolyarnaya Pravda* have among their contributors such writers as A. Aksenova, a Dolgan woman, and Lyubov Sorokina, a Nenets woman. In 1961 they published the *Spring in Taimyr* literary almanac.

<sup>1</sup> A. Nemtushkin. *Timani agidu* (Morn in the Forest), Krasnoyarsk, 1960 (in Russian and Evenk); *The Evenk's Songs*, Krasnoyarsk, 1962 (in Russian); *Tokmav Minngi* (My Tokma), Krasnoyarsk, 1968.



Soviet Russian literature has increased its attention to the life and work of the northern peoples; this interest was roused by Maxim Gorky. In recent years an outstanding contribution was made by G. A. Fedoseyev whose books *Death Can Wait* and the *Last Camp-Fire* are among the best about the peoples of the North. The image of Ulukitkan, an old Evenk, went down in Soviet literature as the image of a wise old man who, together with his people, entered socialist society carrying with him the wisdom of his past. Ulukitkan guards the traditions and customs of his people and acquaints his comrades with them.

In the book *The Evil Spirit of Yambui*, G. A. Fedoseyev draws on the ethnographic materials about the Evenks.

The veteran Siberian poets I. D. Rozhdestvensky and K. L. Lisovsky continue to work fruitfully. They glorify the life and work of the northerners who are conquering the severe nature within the Polar Circle.<sup>1</sup>

N. S. Ustinovich, the late Siberian writer, devoted his stories and sketches to the toilers in the North. His books, the *Northern Encounters* (1958) and *Man's Footprints* (1961), which were published in Krasnoyarsk and Moscow, are devoted to human feats and generous hearts. He depicted the life of the northern peoples, their courage and kindness.

Interesting stories about Evenkia were written by G. I. Kublitsky, a prominent publicist and writer. In 1939 he published in Krasnoyarsk the book *A Voyage to Evenkia*, and ever since he retains interest in the North and its courageous inhabitants. In 1968 Kublitsky published the book *The Native Siberian Land* in Moscow. In 1970 A. Y. Lazebnikov published an interesting book—*Far Beyond the Ugryum River*—about the great historical changes in Evenkia.

The relatively young northern literature has produced many outstanding writers who have enriched the Soviet multinational literature. A collection of poems by all northern poets has been published by the Soviety Pysatel Publishers in Leningrad in 1961.

Among the well-known writers are Yuri Rytkeu, a Chukchi; Grigory Khodzher, a Nanai; Leonid Lapsui, a

<sup>1</sup> I. Rozhdestvensky, *The Paths in the Native Land*, Krasnoyarsk, 1963; *The Russian Soul*, Selected Poems, Moscow, 1966 (in Russian).

Nenets; Vladimir Sangi, a Nivkhi; Yuvan Shestalov, a Mansi; Alitet Nemtushkin, an Evenk; Jansi Kimonko, an Udegei; Nikolai Tarabukin, an Evenk; Gavriil Kurilov, a Yukagir; and Ketsei Kekkutin, a Koryak. Their principal subjects are the deeds and thoughts of the peoples resurrected to a new life by the Great October Revolution. Our revolution has given birth to many literatures. This is a striking feature of the Soviet social system.

In December 1965, the Secretariat of the Union of the Writers of the RSFSR convened a session devoted to the 50th anniversary of Soviet power and the literature of the peoples of the Far North. The chairman of the Union's board Leonid Sobolev said: "It is precisely in the Russian Federation that most of the new literatures have appeared. Their roads are different, their forms are peculiar, but they are all unified by the community of interest, the community of perception and understanding of life and, finally, by the community of goals."<sup>1</sup>

On the eve of Lenin's centenary, the northern writers published the almanac *The Story About Happiness* in which they expressed the thoughts and aspirations of their peoples and gratitude to Lenin.

Many artists, too, have devoted their works to the Yenisei North and the life and work of its native peoples. A great contribution to this noble cause was made by the Honoured Artist of the RSFSR V. I. Meshkov who began his career in Evenkia in the 1940s as an engraver in the *Evenkiiskaya Novaya Zhizn* newspaper. He depicted the toilers of the taiga and the tundra and the unique landscapes of Taimyr and Evenkia.<sup>2</sup>

V. I. Meshkov frequently took part in all-Russia and Siberian exhibitions. His works were exhibited abroad. Thanks to Meshkov, Taimyr and Evenkia became known far beyond the borders of our country.

The emergence of northern artists—Motyummyak Turdagin, a Nganasan; Roman Pikunov, an Evenk; and Nikolai Botulu, a Yakut—is another indication of the cultural growth of the peoples of the North.

<sup>1</sup> *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, December 10, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> *Evenkia*, Engravings by V. I. Meshkov, 1961; *Dawn in the North*, Prints by V. I. Meshkov, Moscow, 1966.

The Northern peoples have long been masters of the applied arts and very original in character. National costume with distinctive embroidery, colourful beads and furs has always amazed art connoisseurs.

Much credit for the revival of the original applied arts of the peoples of Taimyr and Evenkia goes to N. V. Kasatkina, an artist in Krasnoyarsk. Her *Northern Mosaics* was displayed in Moscow and Krasnoyarsk and also at the Expo-67 World Exhibition in Montreal.

National areas have studio exhibits of national costume. Dolgan, Nganasan and Nenets artists are famous for their artistic designs of national clothes; there are many skilled craftsmen of the applied arts among Evenks and Yakuts. Their works are in great demand in the Soviet Union.

The victory of socialism and communist construction have intensified the development of the northern languages. They are being enriched mostly by the adoption of Russian words and words of neighbouring peoples.

The influence of the Russian language is great and valuable. It is through the Russian language that the peoples of the North adopted international words and terms. The process of changes, development, improvement and enrichment of the northern languages continues.

The Programme of the CPSU says that "the obliteration of national distinctions, and especially of language distinctions, is a considerably longer process than the obliteration of class distinctions".<sup>1</sup> The example of the northern languages shows that this process is gathering speed.

In the past few years, the peoples of the North have adopted such words as *sputnik*, *cosmos* and *orbit* thanks to the outstanding accomplishments of the Soviet people in the conquest of space. It should be noted that all attempts to translate Russian words, which had no parallel in the Evenk language, ended in failure. They were simply not assimilated.

In this connection it would be well to recall Frederick Engels' statement that loan-words, representing in most cases scientific and technical terms, would not have been needed were they susceptible to translation. Consequently, translation only distorts the meaning: instead of explaining,

<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 560.

it only confuses us.<sup>1</sup> This is exactly what happened with many Russian words which some attempted to translate or remodel into Evenk.

A continual process of mutual enrichment of languages in the Soviet Union is taking place. For example the Russian language adopted such northern words as *narti* (sledge), *choom* (tent) and *unti* (fur boots). In this connection V. G. Belinsky wrote: "All peoples exchange words and borrow them from one another."<sup>2</sup>

Russian has become an instrument of communication; its importance is increasing now when the population of the Far North is becoming multinational.

Today Russian is the second native tongue for many peoples. Lenin said: "And we, of course, are in favour of every inhabitant of Russia having the opportunity to learn the great Russian language."<sup>3</sup> His dream has come true.

Under socialism Russian is willingly and voluntarily being learnt by all peoples. The Evenks say: we want to know the language of Lenin.

In such a delicate matter as learning a language, voluntariness and the absence of coercion are essential. The study of the Russian language has become a vital necessity for the peoples of the North, otherwise they would have been unable to familiarise themselves with the achievements of Russian and world cultures.

According to the 1970 census, Russian as the native or second tongue was spoken by 75.6 per cent of the peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. It is a very progressive phenomenon in their life and social development, an indication of cultural growth. Naturally, there can be no talk about any policy of Russification. The peoples of the North have become bilingual—they know Russian as well as their native tongues. Moreover, many of them know the languages of the neighbouring peoples, say, Yakut or Buryat.

The more cultured and educated a man is, the more languages he knows. The knowledge of a language is the key to the soul of the people.

<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 19, S. 184.

<sup>2</sup> V. G. Belinsky, *Complete Works*, Vol. IX, Moscow, 1965, p. 61 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 72.



Extremes are intolerable in the implementation of this language policy. Underestimation of the native tongue is just as harmful as ignoring a language of international communication such as Russian. The latter would have meant isolation of the people from the cultural accomplishments of the Russian people, harming both one's own people and the great cause of communist construction—full unity and the subsequent convergence of all nations and peoples.

Deep changes in the social, economic and cultural life of peoples are occurring through the eradication of backward modes of life, traditions and customs and through the consolidation of new, progressive, socialist modes, customs and traditions. Karl Marx said that "the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living".<sup>1</sup> Naturally, not all the outdated customs and traditions have been fully eradicated, sometimes they still weigh on the minds of backward people.

The contemporary generation of the peoples of the North carefully preserves and fosters the best customs and traditions of work and life accumulated throughout their long history. It should be borne in mind that the forms of the manifestation of some, even progressive customs and traditions, can fail to correspond to their modern content. These forms should be brought into conformity with the new, socialist content. This would mean the continuity and development of the best customs and traditions in new, socialist conditions. We must not fear any loss of "national originality". Any attempt to preserve "national originality" at all costs leads to national narrow-mindedness, isolation from the world communist civilisation and, finally, stagnation for the sake of retaining archaic national modes of life. Such an attempt would inevitably lead to the preaching of national seclusion and subsequently to nationalism.

Lenin advised us to "fight against small-nation narrow-mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 19, S. 187.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 347.

Today this "general" is the building of communism, the selfless protection of the interests of the great Land of Soviets, and consolidation of its might.

The Marxist-Leninist theses on the correlation of the national and international and on the combination of national interests with common international tasks are essential theoretical principles to guide the work of every detachment of the Communist Party.

It is absolutely clear to Marxists-Leninists that common international tasks and goals are principal, while national tasks and goals are subordinate to the international. This does not imply, however, that one can ignore national peculiarities and specific conditions. This could lead to a breakaway from the solution of concrete problems faced by each nation or country. The correct combination of international and national tasks is the key to the implementation of the genuinely Marxist-Leninist internationalist policy.

The adoption and assimilation of the culture of advanced peoples by the peoples of the North is a broad and all-encompassing process covering all aspects of their life, including psychology, mode of life and languages. This process has been the basic prerequisite and objective law for the cultural growth of the peoples of the North once they got the opportunity to realise anew their mode of life and understand the complicated social and natural environment as well as their own selves.

The life of the peoples of the North corroborates the historical process of which Leonid Brezhnev spoke at the 24th Congress of the CPSU: "*A new historical community of people, the Soviet people*, took shape in our country during the years of socialist construction. New, harmonious relations, relations of friendship and cooperation, were formed between the classes and social groups, nations and nationalities in joint labour, in the struggle for socialism and in the battles fought in defence of socialism. Our people are welded together by a common Marxist-Leninist ideology and the lofty aims of building communism. The multinational Soviet people demonstrate this monolithic unity by their labour and by the unanimous approval of the Communist Party's policy."

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 92.

The Soviet North has achieved marvelous successes in cultural development. In only seven of the national areas in the North there are 600 general schools with a total of 106,000 pupils, including 24,000 children of the indigenous population; the latter live in boarding schools, all the expenses of which are covered by the state. There are more than 400 children's pre-school institutions and 11 specialised secondary educational schools for 3,000 boys and girls; 4,500 students from the North are studying in the country's higher and specialised secondary educational schools.

The national areas have 7 area, 47 district and 116 sector hospitals and 16 specialised dispensaries with a total of 7,105 beds (an average of 122.5 beds per 10,000 of the population) and more than 1,000 doctors, including 166 northerners, and 4,500 junior medical specialists.

The network of cultural establishments comprises 32 district and 48 village Houses of Culture, 227 village clubs, 308 district and village libraries, 20 folk musical and theatrical groups, 7 Houses of Folk Arts, 7 museums, and 129 mobile cultural establishments, with a total of 1,274 cultural workers. Broad development of the amateur arts of all types and genres vividly illustrates the growth of the national culture of the peoples of the North. National areas have formed the Ergiron Song and Dance Ensemble (Chukotka), the Mengo Ensemble (Koryak area) and the Osiktakan Ensemble (Evenkia).

In the past few years, the indigenous population in the national areas has considerably grown. The birth rate is higher than in the RSFSR or the USSR on the average.

All that offers vivid proof of the undeniable advantages of socialism and is the result of the Leninist nationalities policy.

The toilers of the North, led by the Communist Party, have scored major successes in the development of productive forces and natural resources, in raising the economy and culture of the indigenous peoples. The principal success lies in the fact that the northern peoples have by-passed capitalism on the road from the clan system to socialism and that they are now actively participating in building communism.

The decisive force which has ensured the building of socialism is the Communist Party, founded by Lenin,—the po-

litical leader and collective wisdom of the multinational Soviet society.

The Party organisations in the Yenisei North form a sizeable detachment of the Krasnoyarsk Territorial Party Organisation.

As of January 1, 1970, the Taimyr and Evenk area Party organisations had a membership of 3,425 Communists, including 1,171 workers (34.2 per cent), 643 collective farmers (18.8 per cent) and 1,611 office employees (47 per cent).

The Communist Party is the incarnation of proletarian internationalism, of the fraternal unity and friendship of the Soviet peoples; it represents the militant unity and community of people of various nationalities welded together by communist ideals. As of January 1, 1970, the Norilsk town Party organisation unified Communists of 42 nationalities; the Taimyr area Party organisation unified people of 37 nationalities; the Evenk area Party organisation—of 23 nationalities; the Igarka town Party organisation—of 27 nationalities, and the Turukhansk district Party organisation—of 17 nationalities.

In the Evenk area Party organisation, 33.5 per cent of Communists are natives, and in Taimyr area Party organisation, 17.2 per cent of Communists are natives.

There are 20,000 Komsomol members in the Yenisei North, including 4,677 in Taimyr and Evenkia, of whom 1,023 (22.9 per cent) are natives.

The area Party organisations occupy a prominent place in the Party, they represent the political leadership and militant vanguard of the northern working people. Addressing the Party's 24th Congress, Leonid Brezhnev said: "There are full grounds for declaring that if always and in everything our Party comes forward as a close-knit, monolithic force, acts confidently in the country and on the international scene and successfully copes with the tasks confronting it, this is due to a huge extent to the fact that the republican, territorial, regional, area, town and district Party organisations steadily implement the Party's policy and are a reliable mainstay of the CC CPSU."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Report of the CC CPSU Delivered by Leonid Brezhnev. Moscow, 1971, p. 115.



All this offers vivid proof of the tremendous authority which the Communist Party enjoys as the militant vanguard of the Soviet people, as a genuine advocate of the interests and aspirations of all segments of the Soviet society, of all nations and nationalities. Today Communists repeat the remarkable words of Lenin said with pride of the great and heroic Party of the working class, that "we trust our Party. We see in it the intelligence, honour and conscience of our times".<sup>1</sup>

The General Secretary of the CC CPSU said at the 24th Congress of the CPSU: "Our entire reality shows that the CPSU is honourably discharging its role of political leader of the working class and all working people, and guides the Soviet people along the correct way indicated by Lenin."<sup>2</sup>

These words can fully be applied to the Party today. It is proudly and boldly carrying the victorious banner of the October Revolution and of the great teaching of Lenin, its founder and leader, to the complete triumph of communism.

# A BRIEF HISTORICAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC REFERENCE GUIDE TO THE NAMES OF THE PEOPLES OF THE YENISEI NORTH

The aborigines of the Yenisei North are the Evenks (Tungus), Nentsi (Samoyeds), Entsi (Yenisei Samoyeds), Dolgans, Nganasans (Tavgis), Selkups (Ostyak-Samoyeds), Kets (Yeniseis) and Yakuts.<sup>1</sup>

*Nentsi.* In Russian pre-revolutionary literature, the Nentsi were called Samoyeds. Nentsi originates from the Nenets word "neneche"—man. Sometimes Nentsi, especially in the lower reaches of the Yenisei, were called *Yuraks*, from the Nenets "yure"—friend. Pre-revolutionary literature refers to them as *Yurak Samoyeds*. In Soviet times, the name *Nenets*, has been retained. Nentsi live in the Nenets, Yamalo-Nenets and Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) national areas of the RSFSR. According to the census of 1959, there was a total of 23,000 Nentsi in the USSR, including 1,878 in the Taimyr National Area. The census of 1970 indicated that there were 28,000 Nentsi.<sup>2</sup>

*Entsi.* The name is derived from the word "enhenche" which means "man" in Enets. In pre-revolutionary literature Entsi were called *Yenisei Samoyeds*. The Nentsi call them *Madu*. Some writers referred to them as *Khantai* or *Karasin Samoyeds*. The Entsi mostly live in the Ust-Yenisei district of the Taimyr National Area. Their total population does not exceed 700 people (1970). It should be mentioned that some Entsi are regarded as Nentsi, and others as Nganasans, though the Entsi form an independent people with their own language and material culture.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An exhaustive list of literature about the peoples of the North is given in the book *Narodi Sibiri* (The Peoples of Siberia), edited by M. G. Levin and L. P. Potapov, USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow-Leningrad, 1956, pp. 1003-1010.

<sup>2</sup> Y. D. Prokofieva, *Narodi Sibiri* (The Peoples of Siberia), pp. 608-48; *Results of the All-Union Census of 1959*, pp. 186, 205; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

<sup>3</sup> B. O. Dolgikh, *Narodi Sibiri* (The Peoples of Siberia), pp. 661-65; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 110.

*Nganasans*. The name is derived from the word "nganasa" meaning "man". The Nganasans call themselves "nya"—friends. Before the revolution, they were called *Samoyeds-Tavgi*; 16th century documents sometimes refer to them as *Pyasina* or *Tavgi Samoyeds*. The census of 1959 showed that there were 758 Nganasans, and of 1970—800. They live in Khatanga and Dudinka districts of the Taimyr National Area.<sup>1</sup>

*Dolgans*. The exact origin of the name is unknown, but a number of hypotheses have been advanced. It has been established that the Dolgans are cross-breeds of the Tungus (Evenks) and Yakuts who adopted the Yakut language and the Tungus culture. In the past there were four major clans: the *Dolgans*, *Dongots*, *Edya* and *Kirento*. The oldest name for Dolgans was *Tegol* (Tege or Tegel in Tungusic), i.e., people or peoples. When a Tungus meets a stranger, he usually asks: "Avadi Tege?" ("To what people do you belong?").

The name of the *Edya* clan is derived from the Tungus *Edigu* (from the "lower reaches"); of *Kirento*—from *kiren* (the eagle's clan). The origin of the other names of Dolgan clans is unclear.

The Dolgans call themselves *Saka* or *Khaka*. *Khaka* is the name by which the Yakuts call themselves; in the singular they call themselves *Sakha*, in the plural—*Sakhalar*.

"Even at first glance it is difficult to regard Dolgans as a separate tribal group. They call themselves when speaking in Dolgan *Khaka* (or *Sakha* in the eastern parts of Khatanga region), i.e., *Yakuts*. When asked in Russian, they call themselves either the Dolgans or the Tungus: sometimes they simply call themselves by the clan name," Professor Dolghikh writes.

There is nothing bad or derogatory in the word *Dolgan*.

Pre-revolutionary writers usually regarded the Dolgans as the Tungus.

Today the Dolgans constitute one of the most numerous peoples in the Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) National Area, they live in Dudinka and Khatanga districts. The censuses of 1959 and 1970 registered 3,900 and 4,700 Dolgans, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

*Kets*. The word "ket" means man. Before the revolution they were called *Yeniseians-Ostyaks*; after 1920 they were called simply *Yeniseians*. In earlier historical documents and ethnographic literature they were called *Ostyaks* or *Imbats*.

Now they live mostly in Turukhansk district and partly in Baikit district of the Evenk National Area (the settlement of Sulomai).

The censuses of 1959 and 1970 registered 1,019 and 1,200 Kets, respectively.<sup>3</sup>

1 A. A. Popov *Nganasani. Materialnaya kultura* (Nganasans. Material Culture), Issue 1, Moscow-Leningrad, 1948; B. O. Dolghikh, *Proiskhozhdeniye Nganasanov* (Origin of Nganasans), Siberian Ethnographic Almanac, Vol. I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1952, pp. 5-87; B. O. Dolghikh and L. A. Fainberg, "Taimyrskiy Nganasani". *Sovremennoye khozyaistvo, kultura i byt malikh narodov Severa* ("Taimyr Nganasans". *Small Peoples of the North: Their Economy and Life Today*). Papers of the N. N. Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnography, New Series, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1960, pp. 9-62.

2 B. Dolghikh, "Naseleniye poluostrova Taimira i prilegayushchego k nemu raiona" (The Population on the Taimyr Peninsula and the Adjacent Districts), *Severnaya Aziya*, 1929, No. 2 (26), p. 160; A. A. Popov, *Narodi Sibiri* (The Peoples of Siberia), pp. 742-59; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

3 B. Dolghikh, *Kets*, Irkutsk, 1934; A. A. Popov, *Narodi Sibiri* (The Peoples of Siberia), pp. 687-700; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

*Selkups* (formerly, *Ostyak-Samoyeds*). The word means forest man. In historic documents they were called *Ostyaks*. Their culture resembles that of Khanty (*Ostyaks*), but they speak the Samodi language. Selkups live mostly in the Turukhansk district (Krasnoyarsk Territory), the Taz district (Tyumen Region) and the north of Tomsk Region. According to the census of 1926-27 there were 1,335 Selkups; the censuses of 1959 and 1970 registered 3,768 and 4,200 Selkups, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

*Evenks*. One of the most numerous peoples of the North. Before the revolution they were called Tunguses. The origin of this name is unclear, though some explanations have been made. There is nothing insulting or humiliating in the word Tungus. *Evenks* is the name by which they call themselves. Some Evenks, while retaining this name, also call themselves *Ile*—man.

The Evenks live in the Dudinka and Khatanga districts of the Taimyr National Area, in the Evenk National Area, and in the Turukhansk and Khatanga districts of Irkutsk Region.

The censuses of 1959 and 1970 registered 24,700 (including more than 5,000 in Taimyr and Evenk areas) and 24,000 Evenks, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

*Yakuts*. The indigenous population of the Yakut ASSR. The census of 1959 registered 236,600 Yakuts. In the Yenisei North they live in the Khatanga district of the Taimyr National Area.

A specific place belongs to the so-called *Yessei Yakuts* who live around Lake Yessei, Ilimpia district, the Evenk National Area. The census of 1959 registered not more than 900 *Yessei Yakuts*. Their chief clan names are: *Botulu*, *Espek*, *Osogostok*, *Wodai*, *Chardu* (*Betu*), *Maimaga* and *Beti*. The language is a dialect of Yakut, but the material culture resembles that of the Evenks. In some aspects of the material culture they are even closer to the Evenks than the Dolgans are.

G. V. Ksenofontov wrote: "In terms of economy and mode of life, Yakut reindeer-breeders differ little from Tungus reindeer-breeders and hunters. This is why Yakut reindeer-breeders call their northern brethren Tungus because of their mode of life and the prevailing occupations."<sup>3</sup>

A small number of Yakut cattle-breeders live in the Khatanga district, Irkutsk Region.

Thus the western part of the Yakut ASSR, the east of Taimyr and the north-east of Evenkia are the scene of a peculiar mixture of various elements of Yakut, Evenk and Dolgan cultures.<sup>4</sup>

The author is indebted to Professor B. O. Dolghikh, Dr. Sc. (History), for checking the Historic and Ethnographic Reference Guide.

1 G. N. Prokofiev, "Ostyako-Samoyedi Turukhanskogo kraya" (Ostyak-Samoyeds of the Turukhansk Territory), *Etnografiya*, 1928, No 2, Book VI; G. N. Prokofiev, "Etnogoniya narodnostei Ob-Yeniseiskogo basseina (Nentsev, Nganasanov, Entsev, Selkupov, Ketov, Khantov, Mansi)" (Ethnogeny of the peoples of the Ob-Yenisei Basin...), *Sovetskaya Etnografiya*, 1940, No. 3, pp. 67-76; Y. D. Prokofieva, "K voprosu o sotsialnoi organizatsii Selkupov" (In Reference to the Social Organisation of Selkups), *Sibirskii etnograficheskii sbornik*, Vol. 1, pp. 88-107.

2 *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 20, 1971.

3 G. V. Ksenofontov, *Urangkhai-Sakhalar, Essays on the Ancient History of Yakuts*, Irkutsk, 1937, Vol. I, p. 217 (in Russian).

4 The clan and tribal composition of the peoples of the Yenisei North in the 17th century is examined in detail by B. O. Dolghikh in the book *Rodovoi i plemennoi sostav narodov Sibiri v XVII veke* (The Clan and Tribal Composition of the Peoples of Siberia in the 17th Century), Moscow, 1960, pp. 119-276, 352-549.



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